

**Almost a Walker's Paradise: A history of the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair Scenic
Reserve to May 1922**

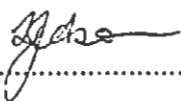
Timothy Jetson

PhD Thesis

School of History and Classics,
University of Tasmania

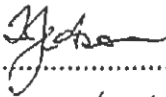
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Abstract

This thesis traces the transformation of the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair National Park from waste land to a mecca for bushwalkers. It is based on the premise that walking in wild places does not occur until walking is a valued pastime, such places are identified, appreciated and made accessible, and there is a group with the affluence, time, and inclination to walk there. Romantic, and later environmental, ideology underpinning this development provided a framework within which colonists viewed the landscape. Aborigines and later European pastoralists, hunters, piners and miners modified the landscape, and explorers, government and private, discovered and made known the area. The continuing search for grazing lands and gold made the area more accessible to the general public. From the mid 19th century the number of walkers, including women, increased from a few to a steady trickle. Most were educated middle and upper class professionals and nearly all relied on locals, often hunters and prospectors, as guides. Although attitudes to the land remained predominantly utilitarian throughout the 19th century, there always existed a minority whose appreciation was aesthetic. Expressing approval in Australian terms was a slow process and even by May 1922 when the area became a scenic reserve some comparisons were unmistakably British. Many forces contributed to this evolution. Some were Australian adaptations of international concerns such as the influence of natural history, a perceived need to protect and preserve naive flora and fauna and reserve lands from exploitative land uses. An ever increasing

proportion of native born in the population grew up knowing no other landscape. The works of artists and photographers played a central role in awakening this new appreciation. International examples provided models for land protection and indicated potential economic benefits from tourism to national parks. Tourism bodies and scientific associations coalesced to lobby successfully for national parks and scenic reserves. Passage of the Scenery Preservation Act 1915 and creation of the National Park, 1916, signified government approval for these new ideas. Gustav Weindorfer, Clive Lord, ET Emmett and Fred Smithies spearheaded a campaign for a national park for the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair area. Pressure from mining and hunting groups ensured that a compromise, a scenic reserve, was reached. The decision recognised bushwalking as one component of tourism-recreation dominance as exploitative land uses continued within or surrounding The Reserve.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to my supervisors Dr Stefan Petrow and Professor Emeritus Michael Roe for their advice and proof reading of drafts of the thesis. In particular the staff at the Morris Miller and Law Libraries, University of Tasmania, and Tasmanian Archives for their kind assistance. Dr Nic Haygarth has been generous in discussing ideas, sharing his knowledge of The Reserve and commenting on the draft of the thesis. There is a special thanks to my bushwalking colleagues for the numerous trips to The Reserve over the last quarter of a century. In parts the work is a posthumous recognition to all those hunter-snarers, in particular Basil Steers, who freely gave their time to describe their Reserve experiences. Lastly thanks to my parents and for their support and to Catherine, Thomas and Eleanor for helping me keep this thesis in perspective.

List of Illustrations and Maps

	Page
1. Map of Tasmania	2
2. Cradle Mountain	3
3. Cephissus Falls, Pine Valley	3
4. Mt Ossa	4
5 Across Lake Windemere to Mt Pelion West	4
6 Tribal territories according to Rhys Jones	55
7 Tribal territories according to Lyndall Ryan	55
8 Territory of Big River Tribe according to Lyndall Ryan	56
9 Map of the North-West Quarter of Van Diemen's Land	106
10 Surveyor General Frankland's Map, 1839	117
11 Button Grass plains, Cuvier Valley	123
12 James Wyld's Map, 1849	124
13 Government Geologist Gould's 1860 journey	148
14 Morton Allport's photos, Lake St Clair, 1863	166
(a) No 4 "'Boviak" Beach'	
(b) No 6 'Camp Lake St Clair'	
15 Map showing Counsel's Track, 1878	178
16 Applications for Gold Mining Leases	190
17 Ellis's Accommodation House, Dee River	190
18 Surveyor Innes's Track, 1897	208
19 Exploration Tracks in 1900	214
20 Piner' Camp, Cradle Valley	267
21 Gustav Weindorfer	267

22 Weindorfer-Smith trip, 1910-11	268
(a) Looseleaf Creek Camp	
(b) Miss Carruthers, Kate and Gustav Weindorfer, Lake Carruthers	
23 Transport to Cradle Valley	275
(a) Horse and cart at Middlesex Station	
(b) By Car, 1924	
24 Pelion Huts	281
25 Pelion West (Beattie photo)	283
26 Hartnett Falls, Mersey River (Spurling photo)	284
27 Map of Scenic Reserve	286
28 Remains of the Pelion Stockyards	316
29 Snarer's Huts	345
(a) Paddy Hartnett's East Pelion Camp	
(b) Lake Ayr Hut	
30 Snaring	347
(a) Neck Snare	
(b) Foot Snare	
30A Hunting-snaring	349
(a) Necker for kangaroos	
(b) Possum Snare	
(c) Possum Trap	
31 Carbide Lamps	350
32 Dogging on the Snow	351
33 Fur Sales	359
34 Environmental Impacts	369
(a) Paddy Hartnett burning-off near Lake Will	
(b) Dead trees from clearing and burning-off around Du Cane Hut	

35 A McIntosh Reid's Sketch Map of the Pelion District, 1919	377
36 Mining Huts	383
(a) An Old Pelion Hut	
(b) Lake Windemere Hut, 1940	
37 Scrip for Lake Windemere Gold, Copper, & Silver Mining Co	402
38 Shareholders of the Lake Windemere Company	403
39 Wolfram Mine, 1920	405
40 McIntosh Reid, (Norm?) Parsons & Paddy Hartnett	405
41 Dead Trees from burning-off on slopes of Paddy's Nut, 1901	408
42 Operations in King Billy Forest near Cradle Valley	424
43 Surveyor General Frankland, 'View from Mt Olympus'	432
44 Use of Pack-horses	440
(a) Ascent of Razorback Track	
(b) Descent of Zigzag Track from Mt Oakleigh	
45 Motor Cars	441
(a) on the Round Hill Mine Road	
(b) Near Lorinna	
46 Paddy Hartnett and Ted Clarke	447
47 Beaches Lake St Clair	447
48 HD Reed crossing Kia Ora Creek, 1919	452
49 'Bully' Hendricks at camp, (a firefly) near Du Cane	452
50 Ascent of Marion's Lookout	455
51 McClintons, Perrins, Hartnett and Smithies on Mt Ossa	455
52 Walking Party at Pelion Huts	460
53 Waldheim	460

Abbreviations

AAAS	Australian Association for the Advancement of Science
ADB	Australian Dictionary of Biography
AOT	Archives Office of Tasmania
CSO	Colonial Secretary's Office
DNB	Dictionary of National Biography
HRA	Historical Records of Australia
HG	Hobart Gazette
HTC	Hobart Town Courier
HTG	Hobart Town Gazette
LSD	Lands and Survey Department
NS	Non-State Records, Archives Office of Tasmania
NWTA	North West Tourism Association
PD	Premier's Department
PPTHRA	Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association
PPRST	Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania
PWD	Public Works Department
TGG	Tasmanian Government Gazette
TPP [H of A]	Tasmanian Parliamentary Papers, House of Assembly
TPP [LC]	Tasmanian Parliamentary Papers, Legislative Council
VDL Company	Van Diemen's Land Company
ZDH	Zeehan and Dundas Herald

Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
1 First Inhabitants: sojourners or permanent occupants?	43
2 Exploration and Discovery: from afar and close-up, 1803-1837	77
3 Myths of pasture and Gold, 1837-1871	121
4 Stepping Stone to the West? 1871-1907	172
5 Towards a Scenic Reserve, 1907-1922	227
6 Pastoralism	297
7 Hunting and Snaring	324
8 Mining	371
9 Pining	412
10 Walking	429
Conclusion	463
Bibliography	470

List of Illustrations and Maps

	Page
1. Map of Tasmania	2
2. Cradle Mountain	3
3. Cephissus Falls, Pine Valley	3
4. Mt Ossa	4
5 Across Lake Windemere to Mt Pelion West	4
6 Tribal territories according to Rhys Jones	55
7 Tribal territories according to Lyndall Ryan	55
8 Territory of Big River Tribe according to Lyndall Ryan	56
9 Map of the North-West Quarter of Van Diemen's Land	106
10 Surveyor General Frankland's Map, 1839	117
11 Button Grass plains, Cuvier Valley	123
12 James Wyld's Map, 1849	124
13 Government Geologist Gould's 1860 journey	148
14 Morton Allport's photos, Lake St Clair, 1863	166
(a) No 4 "'Boviak" Beach'	
(b) No 6 'Camp Lake St Clair'	
15 Map showing Counsel's Track, 1878	178
16 Applications for Gold Mining Leases	190
17 Ellis's Accommodation House, Dee River	190
18 Surveyor Innes's Track, 1897	208
19 Exploration Tracks in 1900	214
20 Piner' Camp, Cradle Valley	267
21 Gustav Weindorfer	267

22 Weindorfer-Smith trip, 1910-11	268
(a) Looseleaf Creek Camp	
(b) Miss Carruthers, Kate and Gustav Weindorfer, Lake Carruthers	
23 Transport to Cradle Valley	275
(a) Horse and cart at Middlesex Station	
(b) By Car, 1924	
24 Pelion Huts	281
25 Pelion West (Beattie photo)	283
26 Hartnett Falls, Mersey River (Spurling photo)	284
27 Map of Scenic Reserve	286
28 Remains of the Pelion Stockyards	316
29 Snarer's Huts	345
(a) Paddy Hartnett's East Pelion Camp	
(b) Lake Ayr Hut	
30 Snaring	347
(a) Neck Snare	
(b) Foot Snare	
30A Hunting-snaring	349
(a) Necker for kangaroos	
(b) Possum Snare	
(c) Possum Trap	
31 Carbide Lamps	350
32 Dogging on the Snow	351
33 Fur Sales	359
34 Environmental Impacts	369
(a) Paddy Hartnett burning-off near Lake Will	
(b) Dead trees from clearing and burning-off around Du Cane Hut	

35	A McIntosh Reid's Sketch Map of the Pelion District, 1919	377
36	Mining Huts	383
	(a) An Old Pelion Hut	
	(b) Lake Windemere Hut, 1940	
37	Scrip for Lake Windemere Gold, Copper, & Silver Mining Co	402
38	Shareholders of the Lake Windemere Company	403
39	Wolfram Mine, 1920	405
40	McIntosh Reid, (Norm?) Parsons & Paddy Hartnett	405
41	Dead Trees from burning-off on slopes of Paddy's Nut, 1901	408
42	Operations in King Billy Forest near Cradle Valley	424
43	Surveyor General Frankland, 'View from Mt Olympus'	432
44	Use of Pack-horses	440
	(a) Ascent of Razorback Track	
	(b) Descent of Zigzag Track from Mt Oakleigh	
45	Motor Cars	441
	(a) on the Round Hill Mine Road	
	(b) Near Lorinna	
46	Paddy Hartnett and Ted Clarke	447
47	Beaches Lake St Clair	447
48	HD Reed crossing Kia Ora Creek, 1919	452
49	'Bully' Hendricks at camp, (a firefly) near Du Cane	452
50	Ascent of Marion's Lookout	455
51	McClintons, Perrins, Hartnett and Smithies on Mt Ossa	455
52	Walking Party at Pelion Huts	460
53	Waldheim	460

INTRODUCTION

In the central west of Tasmania lies a National Park about 70 km long and approximately 20 wide with an area of 161,000 hectares. The dominant topographic feature is a north-south mountain chain which contains many of the state's highest peaks and the headwaters of major rivers, the Derwent, Mersey, Murchison, Franklin and Forth. The variety of landscapes — craggy mountains; lakes, tarns and placid pools; mighty rivers cascading through gorges often in a series of waterfalls, tiny creeks gentle flowing until transformed into turbulent watercourses by heavy precipitation, — is rivalled by diverse vegetation patterns encompassing temperate rainforests, button grass plains, moorlands and alpine herbfields. The fame of this area has transcended national and state boundaries to become a mecca for walkers world-wide and an icon for Tasmanians. This area is The Reserve or as it later became the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair National Park.

Physiographically the area consists of high dissected plateau featuring a 'series of peaks and broken ridges'. Eastward the Park merges into the undissected dolerite capped Central Plateau while the Western Ranges, a succession of mountain ranges paralleling the coast, define western limits.¹ Climatically, despite micro variations, the area is undistinguishable from adjoining areas. Similarly, there is no sudden or dramatic change in vegetation and variations reflect similarities with other montane areas of the state. The area's administrative unity is comparatively recent coming only with national park status, and even then there continue northern and southern divisions. In contrast, land divisions, political units such as electoral divisions and local government areas, and mapping divisions promote diversity. Land use activities, until the conferring of national park status, reflected similarity with and

¹*Tasmanian Year Book*, 1969, Hobart, 1969, p. 31

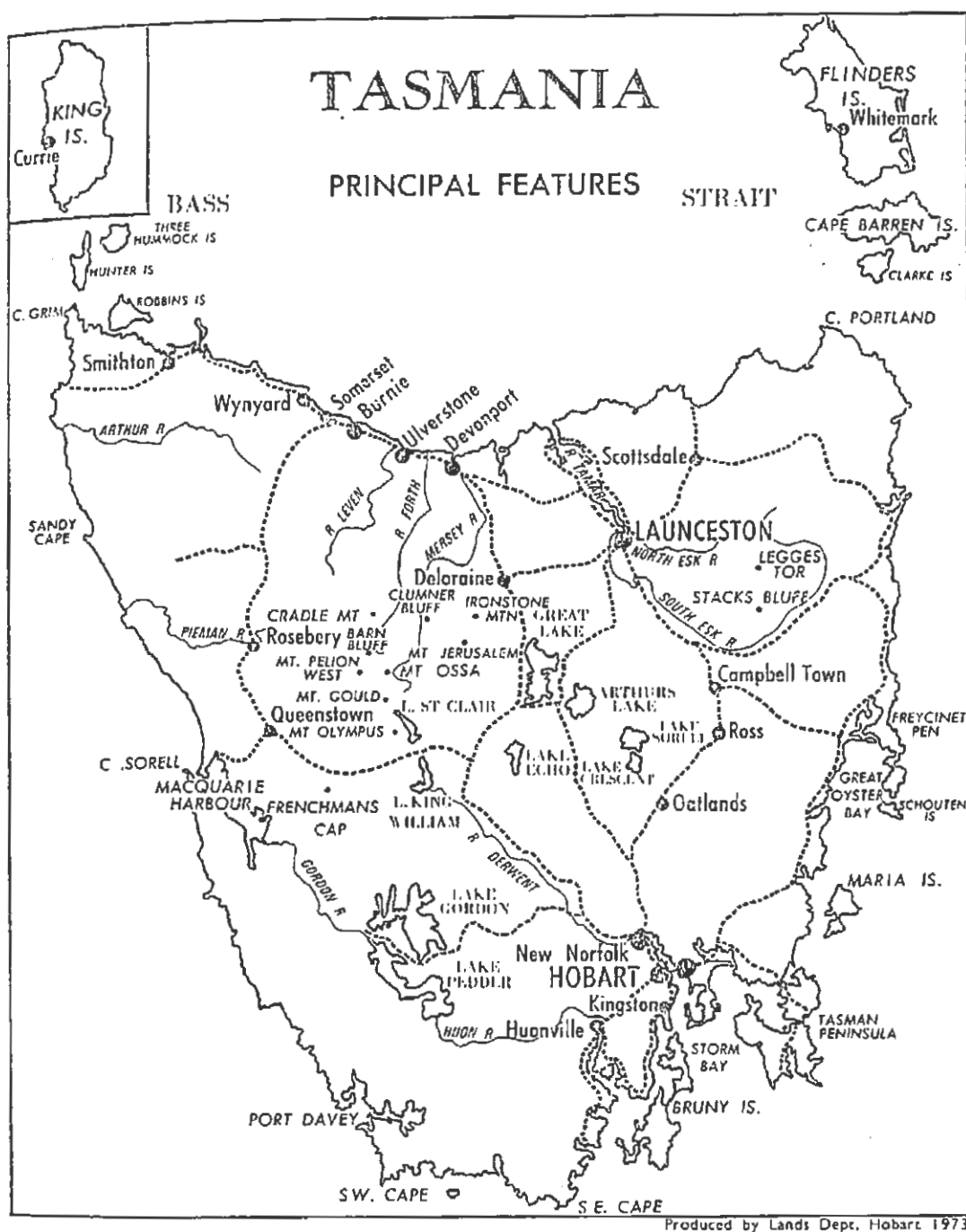


Figure 1: Map of Tasmania



Figure 2: Cradle Mountain



Figure 3: Cephissus Falls, Pine Valley



Figure 4: Mt Ossa



Figure 5: Across Lake Windemere to Mt Pelion West

differences from surrounding regions. Thus the area is a constructed rather than natural entity

There have been different approaches to writing The Reserve's history. Like many versions of the 'history as progress' genre, The Reserve has its own Creation story. According to this version, history began on 4 January 1910 when the 'Father of the Park', Gustav Weindorfer, avowed that the area 'must be a National Park for the people for all time.'² Despite scepticism from friends and community, eventually Weindorfer's vision was transformed into reality with assistance from fellow disciples, notably Major Smith, photographer Fred Smithies, and indefatigable bureaucrat ET Emmett.

Like all creation stories, this Weindorfer-centred account is simplistic. As indicated by Weindorfer's precursors, The Reserve had had a long prior history, Aboriginal and European. The creation story occludes the disparate strands of thought that contributed to the area's transformation from waste land to scenic reserve, expunges activities now regarded as exploitative and ignores relevant aspects of administrative-political history. As demonstrated later in the introduction, this thesis attempts to rectify these deficiencies.

From the early days of European settlement, Weindorfer's precursors had celebrated wild landscapes. Despite diversity of background, there was a commonality of experience. Thus Surveyor-General George Frankland, 'official discoverer' of Lake St Clair in 1835 and, seven years later, Scottish born pastoralist and writer David Burn eulogised the Romantic scenery. In the second half of the century, artist William Piquenit and amateur scientist Colonel W Legge continued the tradition.

²*Advocate* 4 November 1936, M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, Launceston, 1987, p. 31

Post-Creation disciples continued to evangelise with a blend of traditional romanticism and idiosyncrasy. Although less well-known, Florence Perrin's 1920 panegyric from Perrin's Bluff is a notable exemplar.³ Similar messages continue albeit in the more prosaic tones of the promotional-travel and/or walking club genre.

Beginning with Aboriginal occupation, a conventional chronological land use history would examine discoveries by European explorers, government and private, who translated their findings into reports and maps. A quiescent period ensued before yearnings for minerals, especially gold, encouraged more systematic exploration of western and south-western Tasmania. Then James 'Philosopher' Smith's discovery of the internationally-famous tin mine at Mt Bischoff in 1871 spurred governments and individuals into action. Competing intra-state regions proposed alternative tracks and railways to tap the supposed unlimited mineral wealth of the West. The discovery of minerals added another element to The Reserve's intrinsic value. About three decades earlier stock grazed in the vicinity of Lake St Clair and from the 1890s until the 1930s Pelion Plains and the Lake Windemere-Cradle Valley area became significant agistment zones. The hunter snarers valued the mountain country for the winter pelts of the native mammals. Similarly, timbermen sought native pines, King Billy and Pencil, in the north and eucalypts in the south. For about thirty years prior to declaration as a reserve, recreational walkers became another group to appreciate the area's natural resources. In general the aesthetic appreciation of this small band and artists and photographers starkly contrasted against the more utilitarian outlook of the previously mentioned land users. Throughout The Reserve's history, scientists have gradually unravelled the intricacies and mysteries of many branches of Nature.

³Florence Perrin, 'An Account of a trip to Barn Bluff via the Forth Valley in January 1920', unpublished manuscript, Northern Regional Library

Like other groups, historians have been influenced by the growing environmental awareness of the last fifty years. American historians, with Roderick Nash⁴ to the fore, were quicker to adapt to the changed circumstances, and some works are exemplars of this new genre. In *Changes in the Land*, an account of the interaction between Indians, Europeans and ecology of colonial New England, William Cronon successfully attempted 'a history which extends its boundaries beyond human institutions — economies, class and gender systems, political organisations, cultural rituals — to the natural ecosystems which provide the context for those institutions.'⁵ Ecological history views mankind as one of the components or subsystems such as plants, animals, soils and water of the ecosystem. Previously it was believed that this dynamic interaction produced an ultimate ideal state, whereas current views tend towards a situation of permanent flux, which is a closer approximation to the human condition. In the former state, the introduction of mankind was seen as a disrupting agent.

Environmental history is somewhat different. While encompassing an understanding of nature and the interaction of the various forces, values and myths that shape and are shaped by the environment, this genre examines human impact on and relationships with the environment. Humanity's role varies from being one component of the ecosystem to the dominant force. The approach predicates eternal change. While limiting potential human activities, the natural environment does not completely govern choices, so geographical determinism does not prevail. In turn human choices ramify throughout the ecosystem, fundamentally or marginally altering it and thus providing new possibilities. An understanding of natural environment components such as geology, botany, zoology, and meteorology provides the stage for a history of the area. While usually isolated for convenience

⁴R Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, New Haven, USA, 1973

⁵W Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the ecology of New England*, New York, 1992, p. vii

of study, these elements interact as part of a dynamic system. Discussion of Australian examples are given later in this introduction.

As with all histories, adequate sources from all periods of human occupation are essential. For Aboriginal occupation the written records are sparse, and where extant, reflect a dislocated tribal way of life.⁶ Thus archaeological records and the landscape itself are invaluable. Even today the observant can still locate sites such as a stone quarry on Mt Rufus. As well inferences from Aboriginal activities on the adjacent Central Plateau can be used to locate similar areas of occupation in the Reserve. However, a policy of secrecy about sites, and hyper-sensitivity by some government departments and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council inhibit access to sites and associated research.⁷

In contrast there is a wider range of written sources in the post-Aboriginal phase of occupation. Until Weindorfer, most written records came from explorers and surveyors, government and private, and scientists, particularly geologists, botanists and zoologists. These are not without fault. Surveyor General James Calder asserted that, while useful for the 'acquisition of topographical knowledge', the work of a government surveyor was unfavourable 'for either the compilation or preservation of records of travel.'⁸ Impediments such as heavy loads, and a disinclination or inability to record information contributed to the quality of records. The style was formalised: prosaic accounts detailing topography, potential land use, natural environment, weather and any obstacles encountered. In addition to the

⁶For the encounter between 'The Conciliator' George Robinson's sons, Charles and George, and an Aboriginal family near Barn Bluff in 1836 see Chapter 1

⁷For the example of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project, see J Allen & R Cosgrove, 'Background History of the Southern Forests Archaeological project', pp. 10-14 in J Allen (ed) *Report of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project, Vol 1: Site Descriptions, Stratigraphies and Chronologies*, Melbourne, 1996, pp. 3-17

⁸JE Calder, *Topographical Sketches of Tasmania 1845 and 1847: from Deloraine to Emu Bay and to the Great Lake and the Nineteen Lagoons*, Adelaide, 1987, pp. 49-50

palpable hopes and aspirations of the day, the personal voice occasionally intrudes. Commenting on the country along the Mole Creek-Zeehan track, District Surveyor Chalmers suggested potential benefits from modest improvements such as more visible track marking and construction of accommodation houses. He noted the suitability of the high country for pastoralism and the presence of coal. As well the surveyor remarked that strangers were pestered 'for even casual information'.⁹

Environmental insight needs complementing by other historical approaches to understand development of the national parks system. The system of reserving lands for public use was not a dramatic innovation but rather an amalgam of overseas trends and a continuation of land regulations promulgated, and sometimes implemented, since the formation of the Australian colonies. Land was reserved for public facilities such as churches and roads, as were resources such as timber suitable for naval purposes. Following the appointment of the Van Demonian Land Commissioners in 1826,¹⁰ reservations for public facilities and recreation were systematised. As well the role of individuals such as historian and farmer James Fenton as catalysts for reservation must be considered.¹¹ A comparison with the history of United States' national parks following the gazetting of Yosemite and Yellowstone in 1864 and 1872 and those on the Australian mainland illuminates trends and problems with the park movement. Thus, the historical context, local, national and international, is essential. Similarly more conventional political-administrative history is needed to comprehend the policies, intrigues and manoeuvres associated with the formation and administration of the Scenery

⁹'District Surveyors' Reports in Annual Report of the Deputy Surveyor General', *TPP*, 1892, No. 76, p. 9

¹⁰*HRA* 3, IV, Arthur to Bathurst 8 March 1826, pp 120-25

¹¹For this example of reserving land containing a waterfall see J. Fenton, *Bush Life in Tasmania fifty years ago: an account of pioneer work in Devon*, Devonport, 1964, p. 173 & for Dr Casey, FC Green, 'Cornelius Gavin Casey', *ADB* Vol. 1, pp. 213-4 & Chapter 5

Preservation Board. This method illuminates the intricacies associated with the promulgation of the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair Scenic Reserve in 1922.

Despite the plethora of visual images and written words, past and present, describing the area, there has been no comprehensive historical study of The Reserve's history. Historical snippets either consider only the post-reserve period or sketch tentative probes by early European explorers. Aboriginal association is ignored or minimised, while the second half of the 19th century receives scant treatment. In Ian Boss-Walker's *Peaks and High Places*,¹² first published in 1950 with assistance of the Scenery Preservation Board, history was merely a small part of 'interesting information' for hikers. Historical brevities consist of outlines of early explorers, the mining age, hunters and reserve dates. Somewhat similar are *Cradle Mtn-Lake St Clair National Park*, containing brief notes about the origins of the Reserve system, and *The Overland Track: a walker's notebook*, compiled by Cathie Plowman, both official publications.¹³

By far the most detailed and thorough account is Dr Nic Haygarth's, *A View to Cradle: a History of Tasmania's Forth River High Country*.¹⁴ By limiting his geographic range to the headwaters of the Forth, Haygarth excludes aspects of the history of the Southern Reserve which potentially illuminate or amplify his narrative. The chronological-thematic treatment is amply illustrated, although the value of photographs is somewhat diminished through not being incorporated into the body of the text. Although major phases of occupation and land uses are described and analysed, and the local context clearly outlined, at times the broader state-wide picture is missing. In sections on land use the administrative regulations

¹²I Boss-Walker, *Peaks and High Places: Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair National Park*, Hobart, 1950

¹³*Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair National Park*, & C Plowman, *The Overland Track: a walkers notebook*, Hobart, 1992

¹⁴N Haygarth, *A View to Cradle: a history of Tasmania's Forth River High Country from white settlement to National Park*, Canberra, 1998

which provide framework, albeit somewhat elastic, are absent. As well, inadequate referencing means that many claims are unsubstantiated. Nevertheless, Haygarth's work, drawn from diverse sources, is a valuable contribution to the history of the state and especially Cradle country.

Michael Byers' thesis, *Tourism and bushwalking in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park*,¹⁵ neatly describes the physical background. He correctly identifies history as the key to understanding the cultural values of the reserve. His historical account is thematic and chronological, ranging from Aboriginal use and exploration to attempts to harness natural resources, such as minerals, furs, and pastures. The treatment is antiquarian, and the local and state contexts are missing. Discussion of walking suffers similarly. Attempts to harness water resources are notably absent as is any discussion of scientists who broadened our horizons of The Reserve's physical background.

Gustav Weindorfer has been the subject of two biographies and innumerable articles of varying accuracy.¹⁶ Dr Bergman's *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain* biographical account is factual rather than interpretative. His coverage of Weindorfer's Austrian upbringing and Melbourne sojourn are illuminating and refute misconceptions deriving from the popular press. Bergman relies too heavily on Weindorfer's close friend Major Ronald Smith for discussion about the Cradle years. Somewhat surprisingly Weindorfer's diaries are used sparingly. Bergman fails to contextualise Weindorfer's life. Rather than being unique in his interest in botany and zoology, Weindorfer was an exemplar of the amateur gentleman

¹⁵M Byers, 'Tourism and Bushwalking in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park: contexts, characteristics and impacts', MA Thesis (Geography and Environmental Studies), University of Tasmania, 1996

¹⁶Dr GFJ Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, Hobart, 1959; & M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, Launceston, 1987. For an example of hagiography which mythologises Weindorfer see ET Emmett, 'Weindorfer of Waldheim', pp. 13-14, *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 3, 1934

scientist of his age. Bergman likewise fails to acknowledge the role of precursors such as Robert Quail in opening the Cradle area for tourists. The importance of hunting and to a lesser degree stock agistment is either downplayed or ignored. In overemphasising Weindorfer's role in the creation of The Reserve, he diminishes or ignores the role of organisations such as the Royal Society and individuals such as tourism supremo ET Emmett, photographer-walker Fred Smithies and Curator of the Tasmanian Museum, Clive Lord.

Margaret Giordano's *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, relies heavily on Bergman's account, but makes better use of Weindorfer's diaries and recollections of contemporary friends and visitors. Thus Weindorfer appears a more rounded character. This is somewhat negated by Giordano attributing to Weindorfer environmental attributes neither he nor the age possessed. That he was a preservationist, who believed in wise use of resources, rather than a modern-day conservationist is shown by his hunting-snaring and agisting livestock in Cradle Valley.¹⁷ As well Giordano minimises her hero's desire to harvest his King Billy forests. These activities do not harmonise with what Giordano has termed Weindorfer's desire 'to live in harmony with his surroundings, making as little impact as possible on the natural environment.'¹⁸ Giordano acknowledges the role of others in campaigning for a reserve but incorrectly claims the area was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1922.¹⁹

Sally Schnackenberg's biography of Kate Weindorfer, which purportedly aims to recognise her 'real and important role in the Cradle Mountain venture',²⁰ re-inforces many of the myths perpetrated by Giordano and others. Kate's moral support and

¹⁷Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 40 for kangarooing & p. 45 for agistment

¹⁸Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 37

¹⁹Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 68

²⁰S Schnackenberg, *Kate Weindorfer: The woman behind the man and the mountain*, Launceston, 1995, p. xi

farm superintendence were salient in the early years, and Weindorfer continued to benefit from her estate after her death in 1916. Beyond that Kate's influence is a matter of conjecture especially as the fate of Waldheim and declaration of a national park were uncertain. Like Giordano, Schnackenburg owes much to Bergman's account and in stressing local uniqueness both ignore or simplify the broader historical context.

A significant omission of the Weindorfer biographies is the ignorance of tourism. Organisations, such as the Northern Tasmanian Tourism Association and the Tasmanian Tourism Bureau, played crucial roles in the formation of a Reserve. Also puzzling is the lack of recognition accorded to Paddy Hartnett and Bert Nicholl, characters equally important in the history of The Reserve. Their absence reflects the nature of media coverage, and a disregard for low status occupations such as prospecting and snaring. Perhaps more importantly it reflects the dominance of conservation ideology in present society. Less palpable to all but the discerning is the apparent unfamiliarity with and understanding of the landscape in which Bergman, Giordano and Schnackenberg set their narratives.

With the exploration emphasis in earlier Australian historiography, it is natural that there be several accounts of early European explorers. Yet, Van Demonians are remarkably absent from national accounts of heroic exploration.²¹ Most noteworthy, and deserving a place in this pantheon, are AL Meston's attempts to plot the route of Jorgen Jorgenson, Shirley Franks' thesis on land exploration and Chris

²¹For example E Favenc, *The History of Australian exploration, 1788-1888*, Sydney, 1888 (facs edit) Gladesville, New South Wales, 1983, not only leaves Tasmania off the map, but makes no reference to Van Demonian land exploration. Similar in its omissions is M McEwan, *Great Australian Explorers: the courageous exploits of the men who challenged the new land*, Sydney, 1979. M Cannon, *Reader's Digest The exploration of Australia: from first sea voyages to satellite discoveries*, Surrey Hills, New South Wales, 1999, contains some of Hellyer's journeys, pp. 96-7 but not his Cradle trip, has Jorgenson discovering St Clair, p. 97, Frankland's 1835 trip pp. 98-100, GA Robinson & Sir John Franklin, pp. 104-6. T Flannery (ed) *The Explorers*, Melbourne, 1998, contains extracts from Frankland's 'discovery' of St Clair and ascent of Mt Olympus; the introduction is rather clichéd and banal.

Binks' *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, his scope extending beyond The Reserve.²²

More typical accounts are the recreational, overwhelmingly bushwalking, recitals. While usually prosaic in style, some earlier versions are more literary. Clive Lord's 'Lake St Clair' and 'Cradle Mountain and Barn Bluff' well represent the latter style. His accounts describe and explain important environmental elements, especially climate, topography, geology, flora and fauna. Brief historical snippets, such as Frankland's naming of topographical features around Lake St Clair, and Weindorfer's operations at *Waldheim*, are complemented by insights into inter-war thought and aspirations such as the belief that local pride in the scenery and all aspects of the environment would be awakened in the future. Apposite quotes from the literary canon enhance the author's observations.²³

In describing universal actions such as walking, grazing, mining and hunting within a specific environment this thesis criss-crosses regional, environmental, and land-use histories in particular and, to a lesser extent, leisure and tourism studies. Given this diversity and exigencies of length, a literature review of other areas would result in unwieldiness and would detract from the narrative. Chapters nevertheless indicate the range of sources used and their limitations. In tracing the evolution of national parks, there is a review of several key texts dealing with the development of the environmental and wilderness ethic. To describe the cultural baggage which accompanied the first European settlers to Van Diemen's Land,²⁴ it is necessary to

²²A Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company, 1825-1842*, Launceston, 1958 & 'Jorgen Jorgenson's Journey across the Central Plateau', (eds) W Meston & R McCulloch, *PPRST*, Vol. 89, 1955, pp. 107-123; S Franks, 'Land Exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', MA (History), University of Tasmania, 1959; C Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, Launceston, 1980.

²³C Lord, 'Lake St Clair', pp. 9-14 & 'Cradle Mountain and Barn Bluff', pp. 15-17 in *Some Tasmanian Days*, Launceston, 1926

²⁴S Morgan, *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania: Creating an Antipodean England*, Cambridge, UK, 1992, passim. For example attitudes towards gardens are discussed in Chapter 6, pp. 91-108

trace the unfolding of ideas and attitudes towards the landscape in Great Britain and additionally, in the latter part of the 19th century, from the United States. In doing so, significant contributions are described and analysed.

In the mid 19th century, proto-environmental philosopher, HD Thoreau's assertion that 'When we walk, we naturally go into the fields and woods'²⁵ encapsulated the shift in location for walking for pleasure. To achieve this change, there had been a dramatic shift in attitudes to and appreciation of landscape, and widespread societal acceptance of these altered perceptions. Pre-eminent in practice and dissemination of ideas, rather than their originator, was Romantic poet William Wordsworth, 1770-1850. His contemporary, Thomas de Quincey, calculated that Wordsworth's legs, unattractive to females, nevertheless traversed 175 to 180,000 English miles. Wordsworth was heir to a long tradition of walking, of necessity or for pilgrimages, or for pleasure in gardens and parks of the aristocracy.

The most radical change in landscape appreciation occurred in attitudes towards mountains. Common to many diverse cultures was the belief that mountains were the home of gods. Thus Tibetans believed Mt Everest, Chomo Longmu, was the Goddess of the Snows; in Norway Jotunheim was home to Jotuns or ice giants, whilst the Greek gods resided on Mt Olympus. The latter was an idyllic place:

Shaken by no wind, drenched by no shower and invaded by no snows, it is set in a cloudless sea of limpid air with a white radiance playing over all. There the happy gods spend their delightful days.²⁶

Significant religious dramas occurred on mountains such as Moses receiving the Ten Commandments on Mt Sinai. Malevolent spirits, for example the Diablerets in

²⁵R Solnit, *Wanderlust A history of Walking*, London, 2001 p 84 for Thoreau and for a general discussion of walking and literature see Solnit, passim & R Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, Basingstoke, UK, 2000

²⁶LJ & M Milne, *The Mountains*, Alexandria, Virginia, 1980, p. 138

the Swiss Valais, also resided in these places.²⁷ The ancient Greeks' ambivalence to mountains may have been a by-product of that potent combination of human emotions, fear, ignorance, awe and fascination with unknown or partly understood topographical features. Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress* also illustrated the duality with the Hill of Difficulty and Delectable Mountains. The inherent dangers of high altitudes may have been a factor. At about 3000 metres altitude, sometimes called the death zone, oxygen and energy deficiencies affect those unaccustomed to these heights because air pressure and temperature decline dramatically with increased altitude.²⁸ Bitterly cold winds, sleet or snow and low temperatures may result in hypothermia, or excessive heat loss, which can be fatal.

The feeling that mountains were best avoided prevailed until the 18th century. Master John de Bremble's prayer on crossing the Great St Bernard Pass in 1188 was evocative: 'Lord ... restore me to my brethren, that I may tell them they come not to this place of torture'²⁹ Conventional 17th century attitudes regarded mountains as blemishes or deformities on the earth. Poet John Donne asked

'Are these but warts and pock-holes in the face
Of th'earth?'³⁰

Thus epithets such as 'excrescences, warts, wens, pimples and blisters' were commonplace.³¹ Underpinning conventionalities were ambivalences whereby mountains were both symbols of overweening pride and majesty. Michael Drayton expressed these doubts in *Poly Albion*, his poem on 'tracts, Rivers, Mountains, Forests ... of Great Britain'. After stressing the desolate, inhospitable, barren nature of mountains, he states that in comparison to other topographical features,

²⁷R Barry, *Mountain Weather and Climate*, London, 1981, Introduction

²⁸Barry, *Mountain Weather and Climate*, p. 277

²⁹A Huxley (ed) *The Standard Encyclopedia of the World's mountains*, London, 1962, p. 14

³⁰Donne An Anatomy of the World, in MH Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory: the development of the aesthetics of the infinite*, New York, 1959, p. 28 also Andrew Marvel, Upon the Hill and Grove at Bill-borrow; p. 34 contains many conventional attitudes

³¹Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, p. 44

the Mountaine is the King ...
For Mountaines be like Men of brave heroique mind,³²

However by the mid 17th century there were examples of the bewitching power of mountains. On ascending Monte Piento in 1644, John Evelyn observed that after passing through clouds, he 'came into a most serene heaven'.³³

Theological concerns were also important in governing responses. Mountains were regarded as a product of the decay and decline of the earth which commenced with the fall of man. Geological discoveries of fossils produced minor controversies about origin and age, and thus the age of the earth. Probably more important were astronomical discoveries of features of the moon which produced awareness of the infinite both on earth and in space. Awe for God became entwined with or replaced by an awe of Nature, thus forging an aesthetic of the infinite. These feelings became prominent with debate over theologian Thomas Burnet's *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, 1684, which strove for compatibility between scripture and scientific theory. Despite misgivings, Burnet conceded that, while not beautiful, mountains were awe-inspiring, vast, and sublime. Also noteworthy for this work is the tension between Burnet's emotional response of awe and intellectual condemnation.³⁴ Preceding the theologian by more than decade were John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* which both contradicted and complemented Burnet in contributing to the cult of literary sublimity. Throughout the 18th century references to the sublime, especially mountains as ruins of a broken world, persisted. John Dennis's trip over the Alps in 1688 evoked this feeling:

³²Drayton, Poly Olbion, 1622 in Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, p. 54

³³Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, p. 61

³⁴Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, pp. 225-270 & 349-54

Its craggy Clifts, which we half discern'd thro the misty gloom of the Clouds that surrounded them, sometimes its face appear'd Smooth and Beautiful as the most even and fruitful Vallies ... In the same place Nature was seen Severe and Wanton. ... The sense of all this produc'd different motions in me, viz. a delightful Horrour, a terrible Joy, and at the same time, that I was infinitely pleas'd, I trembled.³⁵

During the 18th century what John Ruskin was to invoke as 'mountain glory' began to dominate, but never completely replaced the earlier 'mountain gloom'.³⁶ Distinctions between the proportion, symmetry and regularity of beauty and the awe-inspiring feelings created by the antithetical quality of sublimity diminished but never completely disappeared. Enthusiasm for Ruins — of Art, Time, and Nature — were now celebrated for their asymmetry and irregularity, qualities previously despised. Along the journey poetical language of the conventional or generic, which spoke of mountains in biblical or classical terms, was replaced in the 18th century by imagery drawn more from observation of nature than from literature.

From the reign of Charles II, gardens in English aristocratic estates contained a variety of walks whose main function was aesthetic. With its vast expanses of water, grass and trees, nature supplanted human history as the subject of gardens. Classical buildings, sculptures and ruins gradually disappeared from the natural landscape garden, *le jardin anglais*, although there were hints of human intervention in the chaos of nature. Landscaping, painting and poetry intertwined and influenced one another. James Thomson (1700-1748), regarded by Majorie Hope Nicholson as the 'finest English mountain poet before Wordsworth',³⁷ became the voice of a large and increasing public beyond the traditional elite. In the 'Autumn' section of *The Seasons* Thomson transmitted notions of changing seasonal landscapes after staying at the famous Stowe Gardens, Buckinghamshire in 1734-5. His

³⁵Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, p. 277

³⁶J Ruskin, *Modern painters, Vol IV Of Mountain Beauty*, new edit, London, 1897 & Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, pp. 4-8

³⁷Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, p. 352-3

Roxburghshire boyhood and Scottish 'love [of] their mountains, and enjoy[ment of] their storms' is reflected in 'Winter' which celebrates the beauty and sublimity of mountains. Landscape interpretations by 17th century Italian painters such as Claude Lorrain, Gaspar Poussin and Salvator Rosa were influential in shaping opinions. Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, 1715-1783, doyen of landscape gardeners, shifted perceptions by altering the physical world. Gardens became places where walking and looking were enmeshed as appreciation of landscape became a learned taste. Thus there had been a revolution: from being a product of man, gardens had become places where man appreciated nature, albeit a man-created one. Gardens and the wider world united.³⁸

German pastor, Carl Moritz, making his pedestrian tour of England in 1782, found features of the new fad, such as a guide books to the roads of England and to the Peak District of Derbyshire.³⁹ He ruefully reflected that a pedestrian was regarded as 'a poor travelling creature' or 'a beggar or a rogue'⁴⁰ and failure to walk stemmed from being 'too rich and too lazy'.⁴¹ This indicated that although pedestrianism was becoming commonplace in England and parts of the continent before Wordsworth's 1790 Continental walking tour,⁴² social attitudes took longer to reflect the change. Initially centred on roads, walking and landscape tourism extended to the 'natural world' both in England and on the continent. By 1800 pedestrianism and tourism to view the picturesque was commonplace.⁴³ The *Monthly* magazine in 1798 opined

³⁸For Thomson see *DNB*, Vol XIX, pp. 726-34, for Brown, *DNB* Vol III, p. 22 & general to Solnit, *Wanderlust*, Ch 6 The Path out of the Garden

³⁹C Moritz, *Travels, Chiefly on Foot, through Several parts of England*, 1782, Described in letters to a Friend, London, 1795, (trans & ed) C Nettel, London, 1965, & guide book D Patterson, *A new and Accurate Description of all the direct and principal Cross-Roads in Great Britain*, p 79 & 121-2

⁴⁰Moritz, *Travels, Chiefly on Foot*, pp.174 & 139

⁴¹Moritz, *Travels, Chiefly on Foot*, p. 144

⁴²Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 6-9

⁴³Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 9-12

that 'it grieves one to see a man of taste at the mercy of a postilion,'⁴⁴ thus hinting that pedestrianism had transcended working classes, university scholars and clergymen to be appropriate for gentlemen.

More and more guidebooks consolidated this new appreciation of the landscape. Common elements were location of preferred sites to view and instructions on landscape appreciation. The influential Rev William Gilpin, 1724-1804, combined both in his five regional books of Great Britain, titled *Observations on [the area] ... relative to Picturesque Beauty*. Also important were his *Remarks on Forest scenery, and other Woodland Views, ...* and *Three Essays: on Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape ...* His aqua-tint drawings, which were 'studies for landscape painters rather than portraits of particular places', complemented the text. Gilpin explored notions of beauty and sublimity, comparing the pastoral and wild scenery of Wales and Scotland. The associations of human order and happiness of the former, he argued, were surpassed by the 'primeval simplicity' of wildness. Such landscapes required interpretation, so Gilpin provided a methodology. Not all were capable of understanding — two Cockney visitors confessed

that they could discover no beauty in the naked mountains and dreary lakes of the Scottish Highlands, and expressed their astonishment how any intelligent person could voluntarily pass his time in the cold and laborious pastimes which they afforded, when he might have devoted it to the gaiety of plays, operas, and polite assemblies⁴⁵

Furthermore, Gilpin observed that appreciation was dependent on individual temperament, education and nationality.⁴⁶ He described and explained features such as symmetry and contrast, foliage, appropriateness to a particular landscape,

⁴⁴ *Monthly Magazine* review of Warner's 'Walk through Wales', quoted in Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, p. 12

⁴⁵ W. Gilpin, *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and other Woodland Views, relative chiefly to picturesque Beauty, illustrated by the Scenes of New Forest in Hampshire*, Edinburgh, 1834, Vol. 1, p. 13

⁴⁶ Gilpin, *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and other Woodland Views*, pp. 15-21 & 33

weather and seasonality which contribute to making a tree 'the grandest and most beautiful of all the productions of the earth'.⁴⁷ Comparisons with the works of Italian and Dutch painters were used to elucidate appreciation of landscape types and elements.⁴⁸ Even God's work was not immune from criticism for mountains rarely 'coincide with the rules of beauty and composition.' Thus landscapes needed to be well-formed and connected, and display gradation of form, light and colour.⁴⁹

Romantic literature's role in shaping and creating a new relationship with landscape appreciation and walking has been well documented, with Majorie Hope Nicolson's *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*, 1959, a seminal work.⁵⁰ Many such as Robert Southey, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and PB Shelley, were inspired by their British and Continental perambulations.⁵¹ About the 1800s landscape tourism and walking began to appear in popular literature, reflecting permeation of contemporary culture. Jane Austen's novels mirror these developments. In *Sense and Sensibility*, 1811, Marianne Dashwood mocks the new fad for the picturesque, a term brought into the vernacular by Gilpin. She admits that 'It is very true that admiration of landscape scenery is become a mere jargon. Everybody pretends to feel, and tries to describe with the taste and elegance of him who first defined what picturesque beauty was'.⁵² By the publication of *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813, walking was a prevailing activity for Austen's characters, especially Elizabeth Bennett. Literature added to and altered meanings of words in public usage. Gilpin's use of

⁴⁷Gilpin, *Remarks on Forest Scenery, and other Woodland Views*, p. 46

⁴⁸W Gilpin, *Observations on several parts of Great Britain, particularly The High-lands of Scotland, relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the Year 1776*, 3rd edit London, 1808, Vol. 1, pp. 12-3

⁴⁹Gilpin, *Observations on several parts of Great Britain*, p. 52

⁵⁰Nicholson, *Mountain Gloom, Mountain Glory*; M Reynolds, *The Treatment of Nature in English Literature*, 1909 New York, 1909; GW Young, *The Influence of mountains upon the development of Human intelligence*, Glasgow, 1956; Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*. See also J Glendening, *The High Road: Romantic Tourism, Scotland, and literature, 1720-1820*, New York, 1997

⁵¹On the continent Balzac and Heine were similarly inspired. As well Rousseau can be regarded as one of the first and foremost Romantic writers

⁵²J Austen, *Sense and Sensibility*, Ch XVIII

picturesque as wild landscape rather than landscape in general became widespread as did the concept of pedestrianism as meaning going or walking on foot.⁵³ Literature was now filled with language of the sublime: epithets such as huge, hideous and tremendous; hyperbole such as powerful assaults, observers stunned into silence, images of ruins of creation, and primeval nature.⁵⁴

In 1818 young John Keats provided further evidence of this new fashion with his intention of making

a pedestrian tour through the north of England, and part of Scotland [the Lakes District and Scottish Highlands] — to make a sort of prologue to the life I intend to pursue — that is to write, to study and to see all Europe at the lowest expense. I will clamber through the clouds and exist.⁵⁵

He believed that this romantic rite of passage would

give me more experience, rub off my Prejudice, use [me] to more hardship, identifying finer scenes, load me with grander Mountains, and strengthen more my reach in poetry, than would stopping at home among Books even though I should read Homer.⁵⁶

There were more mundane, but no less profound reasons for the changes. A transport revolution with improved roads, cheaper and safer transport, and political stability encouraged more widespread travel to observe beauty and sublimity of nature in many settings. The nature of walking altered: with the very act becoming an end in itself, the destination became less important. Walking's slowness became a virtue because it enhanced appreciation of landscapes. Independence, freedom and ability to enjoy intimacy with nature gave walking advantages denied by other forms of travel. Also salient was the French Revolution's descent into violence, by which

⁵³Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 1-2

⁵⁴Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 50-1

⁵⁵J Keats, quoted in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 117

⁵⁶Keats, quoted in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 117; R Gittings (ed) *Letters of John Keats: a new selection*, London, 1970, p. 83. Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 199-201 places Keats within the so-called Cockney School of literature, beginning around 1817-18, characterised by its mock-subversiveness, humour and parody.

Europe became less attractive to pedestrians. Thus attention shifted to British attractions. In post-Napoleonic times, limited finances and time, as well as choice, fostered an insular taste. Then during the 19th century, mass scenic tourism grew apace with the expansion of the railway system.

In the early phases of pedestrianism there was an associated element of political radicalism. Much cited is an undergraduate tour of North Wales in 1794 by Coleridge, Joseph Hucks and Southey. Coleridge contrasted the harsh conditions of pedestrians with conditions of the aristocracy in *Perspiration, a Travelling Eclogue*:

The Dust flies smothering, as on 'clatt'ring Wheels
Loath'd Aristocracy careers along⁵⁷

Their plan for a radical communitarian utopia, Pantisocracy, and their attempts at consciousness raising with Welsh labourers enjoyed limited success.⁵⁸ Elements of radicalism lingered throughout the nineteenth century and re-emerged in the 20th century 'fight for the moors'.⁵⁹ Others, such as Wordsworth travelled the more conventional route from youthful radicalism to older conservatism. Less frequently, radicalism and pilgrimage combined when pedestrians rejected ties of family and authority for the duration of the journey. Most common was Hucks' 'travelling for their pleasure and amusement' or recreational tourism. This emphasised strenuous physical activity, often allegedly verging on the dangerous; the picturesqueness of nature stressing aesthetics of the sublime; and observations of all aspects of nature.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Cited in Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 34-5

⁵⁸Cited in Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 34-5

⁵⁹For the battle for Kinder Moors see M Jebb, *Walking*, London, 1986, pp. 152-3, M Marples, *Shanks's Pony a study of walking*, London, 1959, p. 183 & Solnit, *Wanderlust*, pp. 159-167

⁶⁰Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel*, pp. 33-53,

Popularity attracted and repelled adherents, and created and destroyed sites. Thus as crowds flocked to established sites such as the Scottish Highlands and the Lakes from around the 1850s, those less enamoured by the masses sought new challenges and experiences, physical and cerebral. Two scientific developments: geology as a separate discipline and the Alfred Wallace-Charles Darwin theory of evolution fostered a new appreciation and understanding of landscapes.⁶¹ Apart from rock-climbing which required specialist skills and equipment, much mountaineering remained within the overall tradition of walking.

In 19th century Europe, gentlemen and also a small number of women,⁶² assisted by local guides, began to wander passes and ascend peaks in The Alps. By contrast, explorers and surveyors lead the way in new world continents, North America and Australia. This Golden Age of mountaineering, 1850s-1865, ended with Edward Whymper's ascent of Matterhorn at the eighth attempt. The major alps were climbed for the first time, over half by Englishmen, mostly members of the Alpine Club, formed in 1857. Some such as Whymper became celebrities of the day. The Club's literature, the *Peaks, Passes and Glaciers* series, and Alfred Wills' *Wandering among the Alps* inspired emulation. Also important were the associated assumptions. Pre-eminent was the primacy given to successful ascents, the higher the better. Thus it was more virtuous to climb than to ramble among passes and moors. Everyday language reflects this: peak, summit, altitude, and ascent reflect power and status. Whymper's literal and metaphorical comment on Matterhorn that 'There is nothing to look up to; all is below' combines these observations.⁶³

⁶¹R Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind: A History of a Fascination*, London, 2003, pp. 22-65 & 103-136

⁶²MVG Havergal, *Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal*, London, 1882 illustrates this point; Marples and Solnit, *Wanderlust*, stress the important role of women such as Dorothy Wordsworth in early walking and scrambling

⁶³Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 137

The formation of clubs of like-minded individuals was another salient theme. Perhaps the two most important have been the Alpine Club in England, 1857, and the Sierra Club in California in 1892. In the latter the efforts of John Muir, evangelist of nature, and Californian advocates of nature preservation coalesced initially to defend the Yosemite National Park. Unlike the former and other organisations in England and North America devoted solely to walking, the Sierra Club added a political dimension. Club secretary, William Colby's prediction that trips would 'do an infinite amount of good toward awakening the proper kind of interest in the forests and other natural features of our mountains'⁶⁴ established a precedent of walkers/environmentalists claiming the monopoly of wisdom in determining correct attitudes towards the environment. Its other aims to explore, enjoy, and render accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast; to publish authentic information concerning them; to enlist the support and co-operation of the people and government in preserving the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains' were less controversial.⁶⁵ Subsequent generations, especially from the 1960s, became more assertive and confrontational in attitudes towards government action or inaction on the environment, while others believed that in publishing information and rendering the area accessible, the Club had helped create one of the Park's biggest problems, a surfeit of walkers.

Obvious pre-requisites for walking were places to walk. In England and the colonies Crown lands and the specific variant waste lands offered opportunities, while in the United States unoccupied government and Indian lands served the same purpose. Problems arose when the desired areas were located on private property. Confrontation soon followed, often on class lines. From the 1820s in England associations fought for the traditional right to use public footpaths. Later, upper

⁶⁴Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 150

⁶⁵Solnit, *Wanderlust*, pp. 150-1

class walkers like Leslie Stephen, (1833-1904) youngest son of the remarkable Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, James Stephen, and middle and working class ramblers began a campaign of deliberate trespassing. With the former pre-occupied with their Swiss Alps playground, leadership devolved on the latter. Kinder Scout in the Peaks District became the focus for a series of mass campaigns which were resolved finally in 1949 with the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. Land remained privately owned, but access was guaranteed with onus now resting on landowners to refute claims.⁶⁶ Chapter five of this thesis shows that in the United States and Australia, battles for government control of natural wonders and sanctuaries for wildlife were won more easily than in Britain because national park lands were usually regarded as worthless waste lands. There were other pressures, however, not only from tourism advocates, but also land resource users.

Walking had further intricacies of motive. As with much human activity, complexity rather than simplicity is the rule, with categories assigned to aid comprehension. Innate human curiosity has always played some part in exploring or walking the unknown. This is exemplified by Rudyard Kipling's, *The Explorer*:

Till a voice, as bad as conscience, rang interminable changes
On one everlasting whisper, day and night repeated - so;
Something hidden. Go and find it. Go and look beyond the Ranges
Something lost behind the ranges. Lost and waiting for you. Go!⁶⁷

In man's make-up there is a constant need to test physical and mental limits. Daily life in modern Western societies has become bereft of physical challenges but in the wilds, the individual is confronted by personal challenges. Associated is the satisfaction or even exhilaration accompanying and completing physical activity. First ascents, traverses and walks are accorded a unique place in the annals. For

⁶⁶Solnit, *Wanderlust*, pp. 159-167

⁶⁷R Kipling, *R Kipling's Verse: the Definitive Edition*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1940, pp. 103-7

mere mortals, peak bagging provides an opportunity to demonstrate achievement against a perceived standard.⁶⁸ All the while, for many people the ascent of mountains was an act of lunacy. After four deaths in Whymper's party after their Matterhorn ascent, *The Times* editorial lauded the ascent but then posed questions — 'Is it life? Is it duty? Is it commonsense? Is it allowable? Is it not wrong?'⁶⁹ — still salient today.

More recently the wilderness concept has had significant impact on human life. Wilderness philosophy stresses the need to 'save' special areas in their natural state by excluding direct economic exploitation. Adherents stress the therapeutic value of wilderness and, to a lesser extent, potential benefits to be derived from scientific studies and recreational activities. HD Thoreau's maxim that 'In Wildness is the preservation of the world ... From the forests and wildness come the tonics and barks which brace mankind'⁷⁰ is frequently cited as justification. Henrietta D'Angeville's assertion that the real benefit was not fame for being the first woman to climb Mont Blanc in 1838, but the 'awareness of the spiritual well-being that would follow' embraces this attitude.⁷¹

In contrast to wilderness belief that man is part of nature, some walkers and especially mountaineers, refer to completion of arduous walks or ascents as conquests or 'beating the bastards'. More frequently those involved are aware of human frailty in the face of the awe-inspiring forces of Nature found in these 'Cathedrals of God.' Lord Schuster remarked that 'The attributes with which men commonly clothe the idea of God, majesty, solitude, radiance, darkness and storm,

⁶⁸In Scotland Munros are the term for peakbaggers while in Tasmania the word 'Abels' coined by B Wilkinson, *Tasmanian Mountains over 1100m high*, Launceston, 1995, has not caught on.

⁶⁹*The Times*, 22 August 1865

⁷⁰W Glick (ed) 'Walking', *Great Short Works of Henry David Thoreau*, New York, 1982, p. 309

⁷¹Quoted in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 138

seem inherent in the mystery of mountains.⁷² This view of walking as religion derives from the mid 19th century. To walk in a Cathedral is thus a morally uplifting and virtuous activity. Concomitantly if walking is regarded as an act of redemption, then increased length or difficulty ensures salvation. Today walking guide books reflect this with gradations of perceived difficulty — easy, medium, or hard; of time — day, overnight or longer and location — urban, rural and wilderness.

Others regard walking as a metaphor for life's journey. In a sense the walk becomes a kind of pilgrimage,⁷³ with difficulties encountered along the same hallowed route to ensure arrival at the sacred destination. More recently, under the influence of Buddhism and Taoism, many believe that self-understanding gained along the path is more important than reaching the destination. A Chinese Buddhist monk, Han Shan's 8th century poem encapsulates this:

People ask the way to Cold Mountain
Cold Mountain? There is no road that goes through ...
How can you hope to get there by aping me?
Your heart and mine are not alike⁷⁴

Since walking's rise to popularity, devotees have divided over whether to walk alone or communally. In his famous 1821 essay, 'On Going on a journey', William Hazlitt avowed that 'I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time'.⁷⁵ While others of like mind stressed the freedom of this mode, few extended it as far as Thoreau. In 1851 in his essay 'Walking' he claimed the importance for walkers to be free from encumbrances such as debt and relationships. More extraordinary

⁷²Huxley (ed) *The Standard Encyclopedia of the World's mountains*, p. 16. Religious and Romantic influences are palpable in Havergal, *Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal*, passim for accounts of exploration in the Swiss Alps and Wales

⁷³HD Thoreau expressed this more strongly: 'For every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit in us, to go forth and reconquer this holy Land from the hands of the infidels' in Glick, 'Walking', p. 295

⁷⁴Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 145

⁷⁵W Hazlitt, 'On going on a journey', Table Talk 1821, in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 119

was his wilderness Calvinist pre-destination declaration that one 'must be born into the family of walkers.'⁷⁶

To a love of the mountains and walking, Leslie Stephen brought the eye of a romantic and skills of a gifted writer. Famous for many deeds such as editorship of the *Dictionary of National Biography* and President of the Alpine Club, Stephen was a leading figure of mountaineering's golden ages. As romanticism and pedestrianism created a new literary genre, the tourist guidebook, so did mountaineering. One commentator boldly claimed of Stephen that in 'his mountaineering essays he gave literary distinction to a new genre. By turns exciting and ironic, exalted and whimsical, these essays have never been surpassed.'⁷⁷ By 1872 ill-health had transformed Stephen's attitudes to peaks from one of fanaticism and self-imposed duty to one of enjoyment.⁷⁸ His 'Round Mont Blanc' is a masterpiece with obligatory romantic descriptions, shrewd analyses of human nature and a capacity not to take himself too seriously.⁷⁹ Later, he provided a wry but perceptive summary of the various phases by which 'The mountains had been gradually annexed to the habitable world', the formation of the Alpine Club, the golden age of mountaineering which ended when Mr Whymper 'spoilt the Matterhorn' and the supremacy of tourism. Stephen observed

We rushed with delight into that enchanted land; climbed peaks and passes; made proselytes in every direction to the new creed; and ended, alas! by rubbing off the bloom of early romance, and laying the whole country open to the incursions of the ordinary tourist. ... The fortunate generation is passing away; and the charm is perishing⁸⁰

For historian GM Trevelyan, his 19th century predecessor Thomas Carlyle was 'a patron saint of walking' who when he walked alone reflected, while in company of

⁷⁶Quoted in Solnit, *Wanderlust*, p. 211

⁷⁷L Stephen, *Men, Books and Mountains*, London, 1956, p. 9

⁷⁸L Stephen, 'Round Mont Blanc', in Stephen, *Men, Books and Mountains*, p. 183

⁷⁹L Stephens, 'Round Mont Blanc', in Stephen, *Men, Books and Mountains*, pp. 182-202

⁸⁰L Stephens, 'A Substitute for the Alps', in Stephen, *Men, Books and Mountains*, p. 204

others talked. In Trevelyan's many 'schools of Walking and none of them orthodox',⁸¹ the Puritans were the road-walkers. Yet to them the secret mysteries of nature are hidden. In between the road and country walkers were those who frequented country lanes and farm tracks. Trevelyan urged variety in landscape, even advocating the magic of being lost, and love of all changes of weather. Walking was 'a land of many paths and no-paths, where every one goes his way and is right.'⁸²

In describing these attitudes to landscape and motives for walking monographs by Morris Marples, Rebecca Solnit and, to a lesser degree, Robert Macfarlane⁸³ are supreme. Marples provides a thematic account of those who regarded 'walking as an end in itself'⁸⁴ within a chronological framework. He discusses precursors to the major Romantic literary walkers and describes the interaction between the latter's walking feats and literary output. The changing perceptions of mountains are amply illustrated and the debt of generations of walkers to Wordsworth and Ruskin is acknowledged. The part of Solnit's *Wanderlust* most pertinent to this thesis is Part II, entitled 'From the Garden to the World',⁸⁵ and owes much to Marples. Solnit outlines changing attitudes to walking and nature. She expands the context, especially of pre-Wordsworthian walking, by examining a wide range of literary sources and includes discussion of everpresent but secondary strands of radicalism. Especially relevant is Solnit's presentation of a cultural framework within which bush walking can be located.

⁸¹GM Trevelyan, 'Walking', *English Essays of Today*, London, 1936, p. 196

⁸²Trevelyan, 'Walking', p. 195 for the doctors and p. 202 for paths

⁸³Marples, *Shanks's Pony*; Solnit, *Wanderlust*, & Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*

⁸⁴Marples, *Shanks's Pony*, p. xiv

⁸⁵Solnit, *Wanderlust*, pp. 79-168. Perhaps she drew the title from Marples' description of gypsyphile author George Borrowdale as 'the prophet of wanderlust', p. 116

Like Solnit, Macfarlane's *Mountains of the Mind* combines impersonal academicism and self-indulgence. He covers familiar ground: the changes in attitudes from revulsion to mountain-worships and the attribution of intrinsic qualities to inanimate objects. The concept that landscapes are read or interpreted according to personal experiences is pertinent. Rather than being a traditional account of mountaineering, Macfarlane deals with the mental aspects such as motives, feelings and perceptions.⁸⁶ Like Nicholson, he comments on Burnet's role in the changing perception of mountains. Macfarlane cites evidence from art and literature in exploring advances in 19th century science, especially aspects of geology such as fossils and glaciers, which helped re-write the earth's past. Thus it is both a re-iteration and reinterpretation of Marples and Solnit whose relevance is general rather than specific.

From being a dominant force in the mid and late 19th century, John Ruskin's reputation, in part derived from evolving theories on beauty, sublimity and picturesque, best outlined in the multi-volumed *Modern Painters*, has diminished. Despite this, his notions of 'The Mountain Gloom [and] The Mountain Glory', reflect links with the early phases of neo-classicism and Romanticism — respectively political thinker Edmund Burke's concepts of the sublime,⁸⁷ Gilpin, Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight's notions of the picturesque and Wordsworth's poetry — and recent developments in geology. Many have and still continue to quote Ruskin's expressions such as mountains being the 'bones of the earth'⁸⁸ and perhaps subconsciously use his method of appreciating the mountain

⁸⁶Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*, p. 20

⁸⁷E Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, (originally published 1759), London, 1958

⁸⁸Ruskin, *Modern Painters, Vol I Of General Principles, and of Truth*, new edit, London, 1897, p. 288; somewhat surprisingly Solnit, *Wanderlust*, omits Ruskin in her account in contrast to Macfarlane, *Mountains of the Mind*, pp. 54-5, 59, 128-30 who lauds his contributions

landscape. To a man who avowed that 'mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery',⁸⁹ Ruskin's comparison of mountains as

these great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars ...⁹⁰

is unsurprising. This and the escapist philosophy evident in his anti-industrialism had widespread appeal amongst the well-to-do.

In Melissa Harper's thesis, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker: Bushwalking in Australia, 1788-1940',⁹¹ perceptions of the bush are central to discussion of the origins and development of recreational bushwalking. While her pre-occupation is with organised bushwalking as represented by clubs, she acknowledges that this represents another phase in the continuum of walking that began in the colony's formative years. Another strand is the independent walkers who have flourished to the extent that their numbers exceed club walkers. Definitions are crucial: bushwalking is 'any walk in the bush for pleasure and recreation' and the bush 'encompasses country roads, suburban bushland and rugged wilderness'.⁹² For one concerned with etymology, her use of the modern 'wilderness' is inappropriate. While acknowledging that wilderness areas were partly fashioned by Aboriginal and colonial land users such as miners and timber men, this point does not inform her account. Harper discusses different styles of walking — the adventurous, the sensual and the intellectual — through the writings of particular individuals.⁹³ The admission that these categories are not exclusive and that individuals may represent all types during a single walk or over their walking days is important. Stress on the

⁸⁹Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, Vol. IV, p. 365

⁹⁰Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, Vol. IV, p. 371

⁹¹M Harper, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker: Bushwalking in Australia, 1788-1940', PhD (History) Sydney University, 2002

⁹²Harper, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker', p. 9

⁹³Harper, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker', p. 12. George Morrison is the exemplar of adventurous, Percy Grainger and John Le Gay Brereton represent the sensual and Alexander Sutherland and William Mogford Hamlet are the intellectual walkers

educative aspect of the international phenomenon of natural history is relevant to the formation of national parks.⁹⁴ Harper's treatment of Tasmanian issues is scant, and lacks insight. Small errors stem from lack of understanding of the Tasmanian landscape. Thus Harper's claim that 'mountaineers were by definition adventure walkers' overstates the case with the majority of mountains being a scramble involving only minimal rock-climbing skills.⁹⁵ More importantly the role of Premier Henry Dobson in ascertaining the potential of tourism and forming the Tasmanian Tourism Association, TTA, in 1893 is underplayed. The dependence of bushwalkers on tracks cut by timbermen, hunters and miners and their huts deserves greater emphasis.

In categorising walkers, Miles Jebb asserts that it is wrong to claim that 'the only true walkers are those who have walked for pleasure'.⁹⁶ In fact he identifies many types of walkers — pilgrims, tourers, Romantics, athletes, strollers, intellectuals, discoverers, tramps, ramblers and backpackers — supported by examples from Britain, Europe and United States. Some aspects of modern walking are synonymous with a pilgrimage involving a journey fraught with difficulties to worship at a shrine or sacred place. Romanticism's love and admiration of nature can be seen in walks from all periods in The Reserve's history. Jebb's discoverers who walked in search of exploration and/or observation such as geologists and naturalists include many key Van Demonian figures such as surveyor Frankland and geologist Charles Gould. Jebb's assertion that the pack itself is central to the transformation from pedestrian and ramblers to backpackers is overlooked by Harper. That this symbol of self-sufficiency produces an unnatural walking gait because it upsets balance and rhythm is a fact unknown to all but walkers.⁹⁷

⁹⁴Harper, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker', pp. 222-230

⁹⁵Harper, 'The Ways of the Bushwalker', p. 117

⁹⁶Jebb, *Walking*, p. ix

⁹⁷Jebb, *Walking*, p. 171

Attitudes to or visions of landscape are important in this history. Various authors have suggested appropriate classifications. RL Heathcote identified five differing but 'not mutually exclusive' perceptions of Australia.⁹⁸ The 'scientific' vision, in which natural phenomena were studied for their intrinsic value, remained salient to all phases of The Reserve's history whether as pure or applied science. The 'Romantic' Vision involved a sympathetic response to Aborigines and an appreciation of the 'natural' or 'untouched' landscape. Heathcote suggests that a 'colonial' vision, opposed to the scientific and romantic visions, thought the landscape monotonous and/or lacking in traces of past civilisations. Thus man had to transform or improve landscapes by removing trees and planting crops. The colonial vision is often termed utilitarian but it was not exclusively so. The park-like landscape of grassy plains dotted with trees was appreciated. In The Reserve the visions of explorers and bushwalkers were usually Romantic, while still allowing enjoyment of park-like areas. In terms of his 'national' vision, Heathcote suggests that Australians exhibited pride in the new landscapes produced and, by the latter part of the 19th century, pride in the bush. The 'ecological' vision was tinged with pessimism about man's impact on the land and Nature's benevolence. This perception, while present during the 19th century, has become potent in modern day environmentalism. Seddon delineates two categories, the utilitarian and picturesque because 'The Australian landscape ... was not as a rule hospitable to human needs, so that utility and natural beauty have become sharply defined alternative categories.'⁹⁹ In this thesis, elements from the above and Nash's classification (see Chapter 5) are combined so that utilitarian, aesthetic and ecological perceptions are

⁹⁸RL Heathcote, 'The Visions of Australia' in A Rapoport, (ed) *Australia as a Human Setting*, Sydney, 1972, pp. 77-98

⁹⁹G Seddon, 'The evolution of perceptual attitudes', in G Seddon & M Davis (eds) *Man and Landscape in Australia: towards an ecological vision*, Canberra, 1976, pp. 10-11. This is also included in G Seddon, *Landprints: Reflections on place and landscape*, Cambridge, UK, 1997, pp. 64-72

invoked. In addition, insights from Bernard Smith's influential and monumental *European Vision and the South Pacific*¹⁰⁰ are used where relevant.

Several Australian regional studies warrant mention in terms of comparison and contrast with this thesis. Historical geographers were first in the field with outstanding examples as Meinig's study of the South Australian wheat belt in *From the Margins of the Good Earth*.¹⁰¹ Since then many others have continued the tradition with JM Powell supreme.¹⁰² Another remarkable contribution is from an academic outsider — Eric Rolls *A Million Wild Acres*, a history of the Pilligra Scrub in New South Wales.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, mainstream historians were long unaware of these works and/or chose to ignore such approaches. Yet change did come. Sir Keith Hancock's *Discovering Monaro*, 1972, is still an influential example of a regional environmental study in Australia.¹⁰⁴ Hancock largely realises his aim by melding 'traditional historical inquiry' with archaeology, literary analysis and scientific studies. His reading of the landscape, a product of walking the region, underpins and informs the work. Hancock assessed human impact, Aboriginal and European, by examining changing attitudes to and use of the land by man 'the spoiler, the restorer, the improver'.¹⁰⁵ Ecological concerns include speculation on fire and its impact, forest and rainfall and impacts on native fauna. The book is a thematic narrative which relates changing perspectives to ebbs and flows of knowledge and the impingement of externalities such as government legislation and improvements in transport upon regional land use.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰B Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, 2nd edit Sydney, 1984. First published 1959

¹⁰¹D Meinig, *From the Margins of the Good Earth*, Chicago, 1962

¹⁰²JM Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix*, Melbourne, 1968

¹⁰³E Rolls, *A Million Wild Acres*, Melbourne, 1981

¹⁰⁴K Hancock, *Discovering Monaro: A Study of Man's impact on the environment*, Cambridge, 1972

¹⁰⁵Hancock, *Discovering Monaro*, pp. 12 & 14

¹⁰⁶For critiques of Hancock see JM Powell, 'Signposts to Tracks?' Hancock and Environmental History', pp. 213-36 & T Griffiths 'Comment: Tuscan Dreaming', pp 237-248 in DA Low (ed) *Keith Hancock: The legacies of an Historian*, Melbourne, 2001

By concentrating predominantly on pastoralism and to a lesser extent, recreational activity, Hancock minimises other human activities such as mining, timber felling and especially the use of water which impinge upon the environment. This tendency and Hancock's greater emphasis on the initial phases of European discovery or exploration constitute major differences with this thesis. Hancock concentrates more on the tableland, a largely man-made environment rather than the predominantly native high country ¹⁰⁷ where richness of written records for the tableland diminishes and thus the impact of man becomes more difficult to unravel. Reading the landscape, however, partly remedied the position. Hancock claimed that in his childhood he

found vivid joy with the Australian outdoors; but might not my joy have been deeper if somebody had taught me to read the story which time had written upon Australian earth?¹⁰⁸

As well Hancock links land use to sense of place which, unfortunately is less demonstrable in this work.

George Seddon's *A Sense of Place*,¹⁰⁹ a study of the Swan River Estuary, is another pioneering work. Aesthetics in the form of numerous photographs are used to remind people 'of the living landscape, and use them to help us understand it.'¹¹⁰ Seddon approaches the study from functional and aesthetic perspectives making clear that the two are complementary. To appreciate the estuary he stresses the need to understand features of the natural landscape on which is superimposed a human landscape.¹¹¹ Seddon shows how attitude to nature reflects societal values and individual temperaments, neither of which are static.¹¹² He devotes more attention

¹⁰⁷Hancock, *Discovering Monaro*, p. 181

¹⁰⁸Hancock cited in Seddon, 'The evolution of perceptual attitudes', p. 14

¹⁰⁹G Seddon, *A Sense of Place*, Nedlands, Western Australia, 1972

¹¹⁰Seddon, *A Sense of Place*, p. xviii

¹¹¹Seddon, *A Sense of Place*, pp. 2-3

¹¹²Seddon, *A Sense of Place*, p. 9

than Hancock to different landscape types: transformed and Arcadian in which the hand of man is evident or hidden respectively and the untouched natural wilderness. While Seddon deals comprehensively with the natural landscape, the historical setting somewhat unusually takes the form of 'a glossary of place names' as encountered on a tour of the river.¹¹³ Scant attention was given to the Aboriginal role in shaping the environment, and the impact of European activity upstream from the estuary which significantly influence ecosystems. Nevertheless, that these weaknesses have been addressed in Seddon's further major work, *Searching for the Snowy*, 1994,¹¹⁴ probably indicates the author's awareness of such matters.

Since then there have been a plethora of publications pertaining to environmental history. Initially many such as Powell's *Environmental Management in Australia, 1788-1914* and Bolton's *Spoils and Spoilers*¹¹⁵ were of necessity generalisations. Over time specific regional works have been produced. P Gell & I-M Stuart's study of the Delegate River Catchment Area in East Gippsland is an interesting study of palynological, archaeological and ethnohistorical studies which together 'provide the best available indication of human occupancy and the impact of humans on the environment'.¹¹⁶ Gell and Stuart establish the natural setting of the area by briefly describing physiography, geology and soils, climate and hydrology. In particular a knowledge of local and regional vegetation is a pre-requisite for understanding pollen analysis. In examining the link between human occupancy and use of fire, the work explores theories about fire and vegetation to provide a framework for an environmental history. The authors reconstruct aboriginal settlement patterns and

¹¹³Seddon, *A Sense of Place*, p. 102

¹¹⁴G Seddon, *Searching for the Snowy*, Sydney, 1994

¹¹⁵JM Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia, 1788-1914: Guardians, Improvers and Profit: an introductory survey*, Melbourne, 1976; G Bolton, *Spoils and Spoiler: a history of Australians shaping their environment*, Sydney, 1981

¹¹⁶P Gell & I-M Stuart, *Human Settlement History and Environmental Impact: the Delegate River Catchment, East Gippsland, Victoria*, Monash Publications in Geography No 36, Melbourne, 1989, p. 1

use history and archaeology to describe European use of fire, especially in mining and milling. There is scant discussion on the impact of pastoralism as a disruptive influence on vegetation, nor is there any discussion on hunting. Tourism and recreation are not considered, although they are essential factors in this thesis. In part these omissions are explained by the aim of the study to outline impacts of fires on forests and the implications for management. The work stresses the highlighting of natural features such as vegetation in the Errinundra National Park. The authors highlight the interlinking of the natural and cultural heritage of an area and show how current management practices downplay the cultural heritage of European activity. Correctly they emphasise that 'To remove nonnatural items ... significantly degrades the evidence of an important event ... that affected the vegetation of the Errinundra region.'¹¹⁷

This thesis is titled *Almost a Walker's Paradise* to indicate developmental trends in The Reserve and its subsequent future. The qualifier 'almost' emphasises that in May 1922 it was not pre-ordained that walking would become The Reserve's pre-eminent activity. Thus the intellectual framework which underpinned walking in wild places has been outlined in detail. Constituent elements — identification, appreciation and development of wild landscapes — feature throughout the ensuing chapters. At a state level the thesis notes the agents of publicity, whether individuals and organisations, their methods and associated motives. In addition to its state and national image, The Reserve gained a wider reputation through international scientific networks long before it became a major tourist destination. Adding complexity to this is the existence of two worlds, the official-governmental and the frontier world, the second of which hitherto has not been regarded as significant in Tasmania.¹¹⁸ Written records of its existence are rare but oral traditions and the

¹¹⁷Gell & Stuart, *Human Settlement History and Environmental Impact*, p. 71

¹¹⁸Heathcote, 'The Visions of Australia', pp. 81-2 indicates that low levels of literacy meant that many colonials had to visit to know a landscape as they could not read.

landscape itself provide clues to its existence and extent. Mostly the two worlds operated in parallel with only occasional points of intersection such as use of convicts, Aborigines, shepherds and poachers as guides. Only then was their greater knowledge of The Reserve available for the decision makers. After May 1922 The Reserve's history changes with the gradual elimination of all land uses apart from recreational tourism. Administrative history, especially inter-departmental tensions and those between the Scenery Preservation Board and its constituent elements, become central to the narrative. Other fundamental differences are the dominance and impact of wilderness thinking, improvements in technology and the increased affluence of society.

Chapter one deals with Aboriginal occupation of the area. In grappling with the question of temporary sojourners or permanent, albeit seasonal, occupants, the thesis examines previous theories and interpretations of pre-contact Aboriginal society. Subsequent archaeological research and the writer's personal knowledge of the landscape is used to draw conclusions about occupation. The significance is not just academic but helps us understand the Aboriginal role in shaping the landscape which Europeans encountered.

The next chapter deals with early exploration and discovery of the area. In this phase many diverse groups, including government surveyors, agents of the Van Diemen's Land Company, escaped convicts and bushrangers, private settlers and wild cattle, contributed to public knowledge. By 1835 both Cradle Mt and Lake St Clair had been discovered. There were indications that knowledge acquired by unofficial world only occasionally was made available to the official world of government and private settlers. The dissemination of Romanticism and its adaptation by colonists accompanied this process.

Such was the dominance of pastoralism as the motive force for exploration that colonists seriously considered the widespread buttongrass plains as appropriate for livestock. Chapter three shows how grazing moved west from Central Plateau to the Mt Arrowsmith area with pastoral plutocrat WJT Clarke to the fore. Shepherds thus became the first Europeans to live either seasonally or permanently in or adjacent to The Reserve. Many disputes over interpretation of land regulations stemmed from incomplete or inefficient surveying and inadequate topographical knowledge. Renowned geologist, Revd WB Clarke's predictions of auriferous deposits west of Lake St Clair and mainland gold discoveries were catalysts to government and private mineral exploration. Frequently base camps were established at Lake St Clair or further west, but still within the confines of The Reserve. Landscape features along the south western fringes were identified and geologist Charles Gould made the first recorded south-north traverse of the area. Lake St Clair attracted pedestrians such as the Franklins in 1842, FJ Cockburn and Captain Butler Stoney. Scientists such as Ronald Campbell Gunn made the area internationally known through publication of his collecting tours.

Chapter four analyses an era heralded by the discovery of Mt Bischoff by James 'Philosopher' Smith in 1871 and subsequent mineral bonanzas. Inter-regional rivalry to tap the wealth of the west resulted in three major disputes or wars over transport routes. Old tracks were recut and new routes surveyed before activity ceased. Between 1890 and 1920 a variety of minerals — coal, copper, wolfram, tin, lead and zinc — were discovered in the northern section. Initial hopes were high and many companies were floated but low mineral content and transport problems caused their demise. Public awareness of the area increased as newspapers published accounts of pioneering trips, sometimes accompanied by photographs, and artist-photographers such as Beattie and Piguénit held exhibitions. Guidebooks also played a part in publicising the area. Thus governments and tourist and

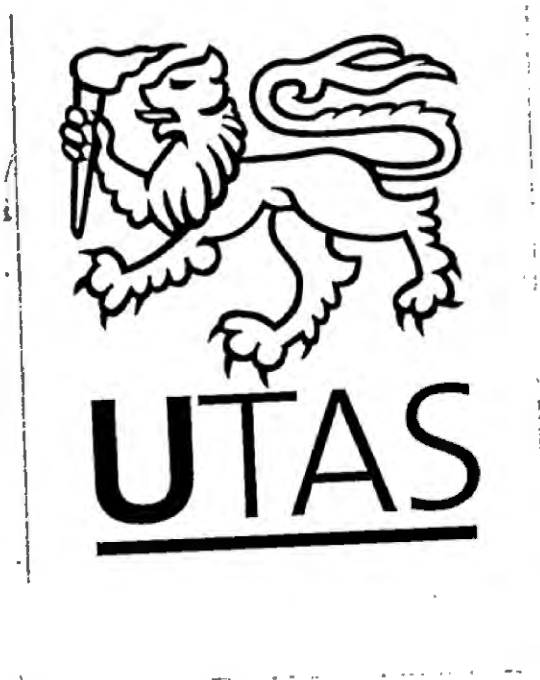
progress associations attempted to cater for this awareness by providing limited funds for road and track improvements and building an accommodation hut at Lake St Clair. Small numbers of walkers took advantage of improved access to visit The Reserve.

From the admission of failure by the Great Western Railway Company until the declaration of a scenic reserve in 1922, increased numbers of walkers, male and female, frequented the area. Gustav Weindorfer is remembered as the 'Father of the National Park', but others such as Robert Quaile, Paddy Hartnett and Dan Davies also acted as guides. Government funding for access roads and tracks to mining areas further increased accessibility. A minority such as American dentist Dr McClinton took advantage of new forms of transport technology to reach Cradle Valley and Lake St Clair. The passing of the Scenery Preservation Act, 1915, and the Russell Falls-Mt Field Range becoming a national park the following year boosted those who wanted Cradle Mt to become a national park. However, it was not until 1921 that the campaign really boomed. Then pressure mainly from the mining lobby produced a scenic reserve rather than a national park. To understand the development of the national park movement, the origins and rise of national parks in United States and Australia, and to a lesser extent in Canada and New Zealand, are analysed and described in Chapter five

Then follow four chapters on various land use activities in The Reserve. For pastoralism, hunting-snaring, mining and the timber industry the origins, nature and environmental impact of operations, and the practitioners are described. Thus the intrinsic value of The Reserve becomes apparent. Examination of the interaction between these groups and walkers illumines attitudes towards each other's activities and attitudes towards the landscape. The examination of pertinent legislation is significant because of previous neglect.

The final chapter on walking acts as a magnet for themes developed in preceding chapters. It examines how international ideas and attitudes towards walking and wild landscapes were disseminated within and adapted to the colonial situation. The thesis notes various ways in which public awareness of The Reserve grew with word of mouth, newspapers and artist-photographers salient. As well, types of walkers and phases of walking are analysed.

The conclusion attempts to discern trends within The Reserve's complex history which suggest long-term importance. The distinctiveness of the thesis — the first major history of The Reserve, the use of hitherto neglected sources such as landscape itself and government statutes, and interaction between the official and unofficial worlds — are reiterated.



CHAPTER ONE
FIRST INHABITANTS:
SOJOURNERS OR PERMANENT OCCUPANTS?

This account of Aboriginal history of the area is a synthesis of early European written accounts, archaeological records, and inferences from studies of contiguous areas. The final result is replete with conjecture and surmise as there are no direct accounts of the pre-contact period. Distance from and time taken for European settlement to spread throughout the island mean that written records are sparse and incidental, rather than systematic attempts to study indigenous culture. Contact time inland was less than for coastal encounters and thus knowledge tended towards obvious externalities rather than more significant, but frequently less obvious, details. Records offer fleeting and tantalising glimpses into an antipathetic culture from a variety of backgrounds. As anthropology did not exist as a body of study, hindsight criticism is unfair and useless. Observers, ranging from illiterate convicts to classically educated Government officials, came equipped with myriad pre-conceptions and life experiences. Survival was the rationale for the observers presence in the 'wilderness'; physical for escaped convicts, and financial for Government and Van Diemen's Land Company (hereafter VDL Company) employees. Thus observations extend from the obvious to the occasional subtle and nuanced. Contemporary theories of native populations, knowledge of botany and zoology and appreciation of the aesthetic similarly diverged. Frequently comments about indigenous culture became just one fragment of the exotic. Even when information was recorded, observations reflected a traditional hunter-gatherer society in varying stages of destruction and adaptation. The absence of the

Aboriginal voice, apart from scraps transmitted through explorers, terrestrial, maritime and spiritual, means that the account is fragmentary and lopsided.¹

Initially this chapter examines phases of and sources for the study of Aboriginal occupation. Then theories of social organisation and their applicability to The Reserve are explored. Details of lifestyle, particularly material culture, are provided. Specific archaeological sites help assess whether occupation was temporary or permanent.

Two distinct phases of Aboriginal occupation — pre-contact or prehistory and contact — can be recognised. Since the 1970s archaeological research has almost revolutionised knowledge of the former phase by providing evidence of almost continuous occupation from circa 35,000 BP at Parmerpur Meethaner in the upper Forth Valley. This knowledge from an increasing number of sites has tapered as the Aboriginal Land Council stand-off with archaeologists, especially those from La Trobe University, continues.² Nevertheless material discovered — tools, sites, charcoal and bone fragments, and art work — overwhelmingly reflects aspects of material culture. Increasing understanding of components of past landscapes, especially vegetation and climate, have facilitated construction of more sophisticated models of occupation, albeit conjectural, on spiritual and cultural dimensions of life. The contact period was brief: terrestrial encounters lasted a mere seventy years, with the latter forty being observations of dislocated remnants. With the exception of

¹JB Walker, 'The Tasmanian Aborigines', pp. 279-287 in JB Walker, *Early Tasmania: Papers read before the Royal Society of Tasmania during the years 1888 to 1899*, Hobart, 1973 provides a scholarly late 19th century account of knowledge of Tasmanian Aborigines.

²J Allen & R Cosgrove, 'Background History of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project', pp. 10-14 in J Allen (ed) *Report of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project Vol 1: Site Descriptions, Stratigraphies and Chronologies*, Melbourne, 1996

maritime explorers, few Europeans made any effort to understand Aboriginal languages or culture.³

From about the 1850s there was a growing awareness that the new academic discipline, anthropology, indicated that greater information about the island's indigenous population was crucial to comprehending all Australian Aborigines. The deaths in Hobart of William Lanne and Truganni in 1869 and 1876 were catalysts to a number of studies, still influential today. In this milieu James Backhouse Walker, 1841-1899, historian, lawyer and University of Tasmania Vice Chancellor, asserted that 'GA Robinson was probably the only man who thoroughly understood the aborigines. He could have supplied valuable information as to their tribal usages and ways of thinking'.⁴ His efforts to trace Robinson's proposed manuscript were unsuccessful and he lamented that hope of recovering a 'MS., which would be highly interesting'.⁵ Robinson's work reappeared in 1939 when acquired by the Mitchell Library in Sydney where it awaited meticulous editing by NJB Plomley and their subsequent publication in 1966 as *Friendly Mission*.⁶ Plomley attributed his awakening interest in Tasmanian Aborigines to a 'liking for the Tasmanian bush', and a stint as Director of Queen Victoria Museum, Launceston.⁷

Walker bemoaned the 'time and labour' required to examine other scattered and fragmentary sources. He synthesised most major findings thus far and critically scrutinised earlier sources. He acknowledged John West's 'excellent condensed

³Charles Sterling, clerk to George Augustus Robinson, categorised a vocabulary under four tribal headings: southern, western, eastern and northern coastal groupings while the Dane, Jorgen Jorgenson, and surveyor-historian JE Calder recorded other material.

⁴Walker, 'The Tasmanian Aborigines', p. 280

⁵Walker, 'The Tasmanian Aborigines', p. 280

⁶NJB Plomley, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834*, Hobart 1966; for details of the 'missing papers, see V Rae Ellis, *Black Robinson: Protector of Aborigines*, Melbourne, 1988, pp. 261-65

⁷Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, Preface p. vii

account of the natives', and James Bonwick's, 'popular and readable account[s] of our native tribes in their original state', *The Last of the Tasmanians* and *The Daily Life of the Tasmanians*. Both Bonwick's books included valuable information but neither cited authorities.⁸ R Brough Smyth, 1830-1889, Victorian public servant, mining engineer and his colony's Secretary to the Board for the Protection of Aborigines, provided a more critical yet still meagre account of customs of Tasmanian Aborigines.⁹ In similar vein, but slightly later, was Alfred Howitt, explorer and naturalist who rose to great heights as an Australian ethnographer. However his works dwelt but fleetingly on Tasmania.¹⁰ Probably the most important contribution was anthropologist, author and museum-curator H Ling Roth's *The Aborigines of Tasmania* which brought together for the first time, according to Walker, a 'complete scientific account of our native tribes derived from the original first-hand sources'.¹¹ Roth apparently did not visit Tasmania, and the catalyst for this monumental work is unknown. The preface by EB Tylor, founder of British anthropology, who believed that Tasmanian Aborigines illustrate the 'condition of man near his lowest known level of culture'¹² is notable.

At the turn of the twentieth century Dr Fritz Noetling's detailed fieldwork provided new insights into the subject.¹³ More important was Archibald Meston, educator,

⁸Walker, 'The Tasmanian Aborigines', p. 280, J West, *The History of Tasmania*, Launceston, 1852; J Bonwick, *The last of the Tasmanians, or, The black war of Van Diemen's Land*, Adelaide, 1969 & *The daily life and origin of the Tasmanians*. New York, [1967]

⁹R Brough Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria: with notes relating to the habits of the natives of other parts of Australia and Tasmania*, Melbourne, 1878.

¹⁰A Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, London, 1904; for biographical details see WEH Stanner, 'Alfred William Howitt', *ADB* Vol 4, pp. 432-5

¹¹H Ling Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania*, Hobart, 1968. Originally the work was published in two editions, 1890 and 1899; for biographical details see H Griffin, 'Henry Ling Roth', *ADB* Vol 11, pp. 461-2; for Walker's view, 'The Tasmanian Aborigines', p. 281

¹²Ling Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania*, p. v

¹³Among his many papers, mainly in the *PPRST*, are 'Red Ochre and its use by the Aborigines of Tasmania', *PPRST* 1909, pp. 30-8; 'Bone implements of the Tasmanian Aborigine', *Tasmanian Naturalist* Vol 1, (3), pp. 1-6; 'The Native Quarry on Coal Hill, near Melton Mowbray, Tasmania', *Weekly Courier* 10 August 1907

historian and amateur archaeologist,¹⁴ whose views on the Aborigines were positive. In addition to studying the relations between Aborigines and VDL Company, Meston examined art work at Mt Cameron and The Bluff, Devonport. While there were other archaeological discoveries, no systematic studies arose.

Discoveries and reinterpretations remained irregular until Professor John Mulvaney led an Australia-wide flowering of archaeology from the 1960s. The invention of radio carbon dating in the late 1940s greatly assisted development of archaeology. Tasmania was enveloped in the worldwide emergence of interest in and studies of indigenous communities¹⁵ and 'outsiders', prominent Australian archaeologists, Rhys Jones and Sandra Bowdler, energised the existing amateur tradition. Jones' excavations at Rocky Cape and West Point between 1963-1965 and Harry Lourandos at Little Swanport in 1968 are early examples of more systematic fieldwork. The Bethune Liberal Government's establishment of the National Parks and Wildlife Service in 1972 and *Friendly Mission* further stimulated interest. Then Kevin Kiernan's discovery of Fraser, later Kutikina, Cave in 1981 and subsequent follow-up by Jones, a La Trobe University team, with Jim Allen and Richard Cosgrove prominent, and local archaeologist Don Ranson, dramatically altered perceptions about Aboriginal occupation of Tasmania. They revealed that by inhabiting the South West and Central Highlands, Tasmanian Aborigines were the most southerly of all peoples during the last ice age. Their adaptation to harsh conditions showed a group with remarkable survival skills and ability to harness available resources.¹⁶

¹⁴For biographical details see NJB Plomley, 'Archibald Lawrence Meston', *ADB* Vol 10, pp. 489-90

¹⁵R Jones, 'Hunting Forbears', pp. 21-22 in M Roe, (ed) *The Flow of Culture: Tasmanian Studies*, Canberra 1988

¹⁶Interview with Rhys Jones, 'The extreme climatic place?' *Hemisphere*, July-August 1981, pp. 50-56; the School of Archaeology, La Trobe University published findings in the multi-volume *Report of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project* beginning in 1996

Social organisation

In 1838 GA Robinson asserted that 'the island was divided and subdivided by the natives into many districts, and contained many nations'.¹⁷ Quaker James Backhouse,¹⁸ who travelled the colony with George Washington Walker between 1832 and 1834, visited Aborigines at Wybalena, Flinders Island. A family of a few individuals which 'occupies its own fire' was the basis of his two level model. Several families composed tribes, headed by chiefs of 'extraordinary prowess'.¹⁹ Backhouse identified four tribes — Ben Lomond, Oyster Bay, Stony Creek and Western Tribe — differentiated by culture and language. Erstwhile Superintendent and medical officer at Wybalena, Joseph Milligan, arrived at a different conclusion, estimating 20 tribes and sub-tribes, each consisting of 50 to 250 people, and isolated three language groups.²⁰

Sixty years after Robinson, JB Walker, son of GW Walker, opined that very little of the social organisation was known and that tribal divisions were uncertain.²¹ This, he lamented, stemmed from the disappearance of Robinson's manuscript and proposed map of Tasmania 'with the Aborigines' names for mountains, rivers, and districts'.²² Despite earlier observers' imprecise use of 'tribe', Walker believed that Robinson's 'nations' were better designated 'mobs' or sub-tribes which grouped themselves into broader divisions or tribes. Walker discerned four tribes — Southern, Western, Central and Eastern and Northern and North-Eastern — based

¹⁷*The Colonist*, 31 October 1838 & JB Walker, 'Some notes on the tribal divisions of the Aborigines of Tasmania' in *Early Tasmania*, p. 267

¹⁸MT Trott, 'James Backhouse', *ADB*, Vol 1, pp. 45-6

¹⁹J Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, London, 1843 & New York, 1967, pp. 104-106

²⁰J Milligan, 'On the dialects and language of the Aboriginal tribes of Tasmania, and on their manners and customs', *PPRST* 1859, pp. 275-282 & WG Hoddinott, 'Joseph Milligan', *ADB*, Vol 2, pp. 230-231; for criticism of Milligan, see NJB Plomley, *The Tasmanian Tribes and Cicatrices as Tribal Indications among the Tasmanian Aborigines*, Occasional Paper No 5, Queen Victoria Museum, 1992, pp. 6-7

²¹JB Walker 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions of the Aborigines of Tasmania' in Walker, *Early Tasmania*, p. 269

²²Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 267

on territory, Robinson's views on languages and Milligan's vocabularies. Each tribe or subtribe 'probably occupied a definite district which was recognised as its special territory' and often warred with each other. He incorrectly claimed that after 1804 tribal differences were laid aside in the fight against the common enemy.²³ The Western tribe was restricted to the coastal littoral because the 'country inland being generally unsuitable for game'²⁴ and thus was isolated from central Tasmania. The North-West tribes, based between Emu Bay and Circular Head, frequented the regularly burnt Hampshire and Surrey Hills and Middlesex Plains.²⁵ Thus coastal and montane environments were linked by tracks through heavily timbered forest and alpine country. A Central division entity, the Big River tribe, which occupied the valley of the Derwent and its main tributaries, Ouse, Clyde, Dee and Shannon, and the elevated Lake Country, ventured west to Lake St Clair and Mount King William, and 'probably' beyond Mount Arrowsmith.²⁶ From Arrowsmith, there was access to the south west and west via button grass plains. Walker also considered the possibility that the Big River and Oyster Bay tribes were one entity.²⁷ He was uncertain whether tribes based at Port Sorell and the Mersey were affiliated with the Port Dalrymple group because of uncertainty about the western boundary of the North and North-East Tribe.²⁸

From the 1970s Rhys Jones was at the forefront of studies of Tasmanian Aborigines. Synthesising contributions of previous scholars such as Walker and Roth, linguistic studies,²⁹ and, particularly Plomley, Jones proposed a conceptual

²³Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 278. In July 1830 the Big River and Ben Lomond tribe fought on the Central Plateau over women despite Roving Parties pursuing Aborigines

²⁴Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 271

²⁵Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 272

²⁶Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 273

²⁷Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 275

²⁸Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 276. The western limit may have been in the 'forest country on the west side of the Mersey'.

²⁹Examples of linguistic studies include Capell, O'Grady and Wurm, W Schmidt's *Die Tasmanischen Sprachen*, 1952

framework for future studies. Jones's three fold social organisation classification — hearth group, band and tribe — ³⁰ has become the model for most subsequent interpretations, although debts to earlier scholars such as Backhouse and Walker are obvious. Consisting of the immediate family and sometimes friends, the hearth group numbered between two and seven or eight people. They camped together and cooked around a single fire. More important was the band, the basic social unit which was 'a group of people who called themselves by a particular name, and were known by that or other names of other people.'³¹ There appeared to be no formal social structure but often a male, renowned for fighting and hunting prowess, became leader. The band occupied a fairly well defined territory or country whose boundaries usually were marked by prominent topographical features. The band did not confine itself to its territory, despite each area, approximately 500-800 sq kms, containing a diversity of resources. The slightly larger 'annual territory' encompassed seasonal movements, sanctioned or trespassing, which were regulated by a fluctuating food supply and a need for other resources, such as ochre and flints.³² Fighting with other bands was common and many disputes stemmed from the taking of women.³³ On average, bands consisted of 40-70 people including children.³⁴ Together the bands formed a political unit, the tribe, 'that agglomeration of bands which lived in contiguous regions, spoke the same language or dialect, shared the same cultural traits, usually intermarried, had a similar pattern of seasonal movement, habitually met together for economic and other reasons, the pattern of whose peaceful relations were with the agglomeration and of whose enmities and

³⁰R Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', pp. 324-330 in NB Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, Canberra, 1974 for overall discussion; for Tindale's views see pp. 30-1 & 115 where he links development to AP Elkin's work

³¹Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 324

³²R Jones, 'Man as an element of a continental fauna: the case of the sundcring of the Bassian Bridge,' in J Allen, J Golson & R Jones (ed) *Sunda and Sahul: prehistoric studies in Southeast Asia*, London, 1977, p. 367

³³Perhaps Tindale's views on tribal property rights in foods, and economic rights to resources, such as woods and quarries, are applicable, Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, p. 36

³⁴Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 325

military adventures were directed outside it.³⁵ Robinson and Walker used the term 'tribe' differently, so Jones assigned 'band' to a Robinson tribe and 'tribe' for a Walker tribe.³⁶ In total, Jones believed, there were nine tribes and between 70 and 85 bands.³⁷ Given the relative smallness of the island population, perhaps Alfred Howitt's view that 'totemism combined with exogamy is at the root of social organisation' is applicable, the latter being necessary to enlarge tribal gene pools.³⁸ Similarly it is possible to envisage circumstances in an exogenous system when bands split, with reabsorption and extinction possible outcomes.³⁹

Coastal bands, Tarkine from Sandy Cape, Manegin and Peerapper from Arthur River and West Point, and from Studland Bay and Cape Grim the Pendowte and Pennemukeer, of the North Western tribe regularly travelled to the northern tribe's high inland country, Surrey and Hampshire Hills and Middlesex Plains. Two routes were utilised: along the coast to Emu Bay and then inland through fire maintained plains or across the Norfolk Range to the south west of Surrey Hills.⁴⁰ Inland bush foods were attractions.⁴¹ The Mersey River apparently marked the eastward limit of travel for this tribe.⁴² Contact with easterly tribes was usually restricted to meetings with the Big River tribe, occasionally accompanied by allies, and occurred mostly at ochre mines.⁴³ To support his view that the country between western Central Plateau and western littoral was unoccupied, Jones stated that the Southwest Tribe had no eastward route across mountains to the Plateau.

³⁵Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 328

³⁶Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 323

³⁷Jones, 'Man as an element of a continental fauna,' p. 321 & Jones, 'The demography of Hunters and Gatherers in Tasmania,' in DJ Mulvaney & J Golson (eds) *Aboriginal man and the environment in Australia*, Canberra, 1991, p. 279

³⁸Howitt, *The Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, p. 151

³⁹Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, p. 31

⁴⁰Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 334, Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 789 (2 September 1833) & 791 (5 September 1833)

⁴¹Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 334; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 600 (27 April 1832) & 875 (7 April 1834)

⁴²Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 335; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 217 (22 September 1830)

⁴³Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 600 (27 April 1832)

However he recognised fluidity of boundaries by identifying the Peternidic band, located between the Pieman River and Macquarie Harbour.⁴⁴ Alternatively, the Peternidic might be a reference to a semi-mythical westerly band of the Big River tribe. The band's location opposite the most westerly extension of the Big River tribe and the discovery by surveyor Calder, in 1840 of Aboriginal huts and weapons near Mt Arrowsmith/Frenchman's Cap may support this view.⁴⁵ Jones hypothesised that these belonged to a small relict group advancing westward before encroaching pastoral expansion and that the plateau-coast route may have been used in troublesome times.⁴⁶

Given the Big River tribe's occupation of the Central Plateau, it is probable that they visited The Reserve. Jones agreed with Walker's limits: in the west Mt Arrowsmith and Lake St Clair, then north east to Great Lake, Lake Augusta and Western Tiers.⁴⁷ (See Figure 6) Northern boundaries followed the Tiers eastward from near Quamby Bluff. Jones identified two routes northward: between Dry's Bluff and Quamby Bluff along Penny Royal Creek which then joined the east-west route leading to ochre mine at Mt Gog, the Surrey and Hampshire Hills and mines at Housetop.⁴⁸ The latter was a convenient meeting place for northwest groups.⁴⁹ Jones claimed the other route 'led from the vicinity of Lake St Clair past Cradle Mountain and Lake Dove to just south of Barn Bluff'⁵⁰ despite the obvious anomaly that Barn Bluff lies to the south of Cradle Mt.⁵¹ He also believed that this high level Aboriginal route largely coincided with the present day Overland Track.

⁴⁴Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', pp. 336-7; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 974 (appendix 5) & 128 (13 March 1830)

⁴⁵Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', pp. 333-334; JE Calder 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, 1849, pp. 419-20

⁴⁶Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 342

⁴⁷Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 341

⁴⁸For Quamby track see Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 549-51 (12 December 1831) & 554 (15 December 1831) for visits to Surrey Hills

⁴⁹Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 600 (27 April 1832) & 604 (5 May 1832)

⁵⁰Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 343

⁵¹If Black Bluff is substituted for Barn Bluff then there are no contradictions.

This, however, begs the question why bands on the central west or northwest of the Plateau would travel south or southwest towards Lake St Clair to join this route when there are alternative paths further north which would have permitted access. Jones was not strictly correct as according to Robinson, the Aboriginal woman, Jenny, there was a track from the 'LARMAIRRE country and lakes by Cradle Mountain to Surrey Hills'.⁵² The precise entry point into the Reserve is unclear. Both paths gave access to northern tribes with whom relations were largely amicable.⁵³ More interestingly, Jones believes the tribe was a prime example of 'montane ecological adaptation'.⁵⁴ Although the Big River tribe normally departed the high country in winter, it could, under exceptional circumstances, as in 1830-1831, winter here.

Jones' inclusion of The Reserve in the unoccupied zone betwixt plateau and coastal littoral is based on inadequate topographical knowledge. Small button grass plains and open forest country provide ingress/egress between the two landscapes and river vallies contain varied food resources. Limited intrusion of fire tolerant Eucalypt woodland into temperate rainforest on the Derwent's western fringes due to Aboriginal burning,⁵⁵ further weakens Jones' assertion of vacancy. Eastward of the Reserve variations in landform, fauna, flora and climate across the Plateau are minimal. Thus, a more accurate boundary would seem to be within The Reserve.

⁵²Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 343, Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 889 (25 June 1834) & 890 (27 June 1834)

⁵³For conflict, Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 500 (3 November 1831) & 554 (15 December 1831)

⁵⁴Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 343

⁵⁵Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 341; JM Gilbert, 'Forest succession in the Florentine Valley, Tasmania', *PPRST*, Vol. 93, 1959, p. 141; WD Jackson, 'Fire and the Tasmanian Flora', *Tasmanian Year Book*, Hobart, 1968, pp. 50-55 & WD Jackson, 'Fire, air, water and earth - an elemental ecology of Tasmania', *Proceedings of the Ecological Society of Australia*, Vol 3, 1968, pp. 9-16

The North tribe's territory extended west to Emu Bay and then inland past Hampshire Hills to Surrey Hills. The southern boundary extended south of Black Bluff to Middlesex Plains to the Western Tiers near Mt Roland.⁵⁶ Interestingly such limits provided easy access to the northern half of the Reserve. Aboriginal burning is believed to have formed open poa grassland and cessation of burning associated with their removal resulted in reversion to scrub and encroaching forests.⁵⁷ Anthropologist Betty Hiatt suggests that boundaries of sedgeland, dominated by button grass, were extended beyond edaphic or soil limits, by repeated Aboriginal burning. She estimated that nearly half this area was suitable for rainforest.⁵⁸ Internal movements suggest that the norm was for summer excursions to the high plains for wallaby, wombat, emu and possum because of the possibility of heavy winter snowfalls.⁵⁹ Winter forays could occur, as demonstrated by the Big River tribe, if there was a need such as the Tommyginner moving from Surrey Hills to the Upper Forth.⁶⁰ The Noeteler band of the Hampshire Hills⁶¹ may also have had access to The Reserve.

In 1981, Dr Lyndall Ryan in *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, adopted Jones' social divisions and tribal grouping.⁶² (See Figure 7) Ryan has the Big River tribe isolated by high mountains on the northwest and rugged topography to the southwest. The boundaries are imprecise: 'across very high mountains beyond the source of the Derwent River to the southwest corner of the Surrey Hills on the boundary of the North and North West tribes, then east through the extreme

⁵⁶Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 343

⁵⁷Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 268 and J Fenton, *Bushlife in Tasmania*, London, 1891, p. 117

⁵⁸B Hiatt, 'The food quest and the economy of the Tasmanian Aborigines', *Oceania*, Vol 38, 1967, pp. 190-219 at p. 212

⁵⁹Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 345; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 203 (21 August 1830)

⁶⁰Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 344; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 884 (10 June 1834), 885 (29 June 1834) & 237 Note 157 Letter from Hellyer re Aborigines at Vale of Belvoir in winter

⁶¹For boundaries see Jones, 'Tasmanian Tribes', p. 343 & for bands, Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, Appendix 5; alternative spelling Parhoinyepairtorhe

⁶²L Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, St Lucia, Queensland, 1981, pp. 13-14

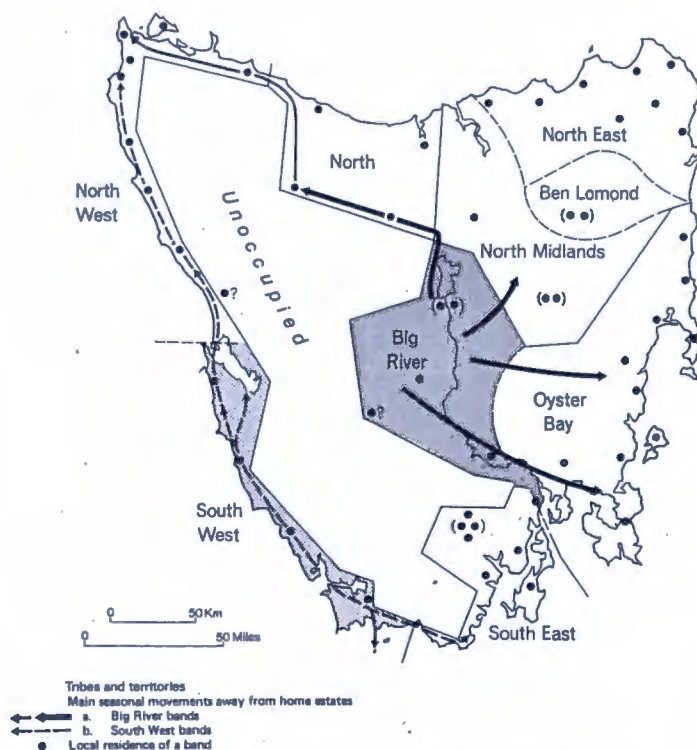


Figure 6 Tribal territories according to Rhys Jones

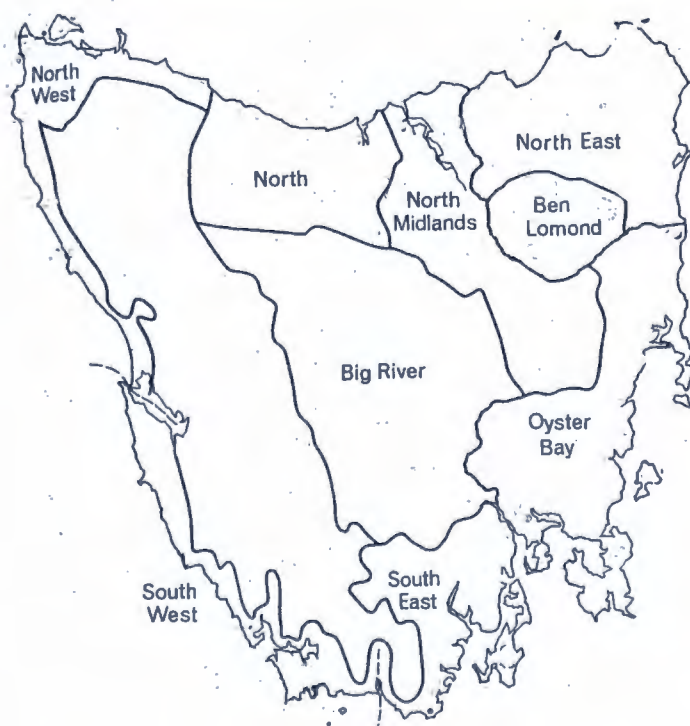
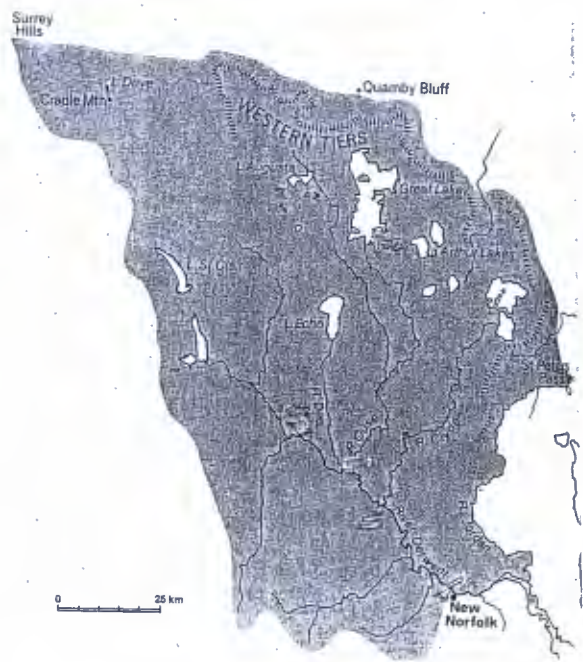
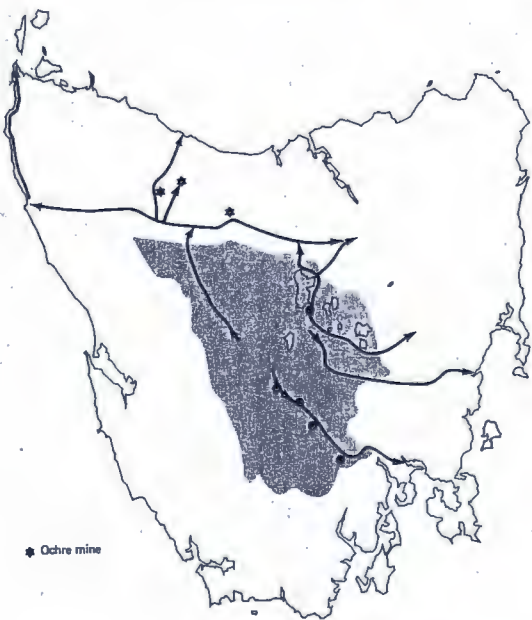


Figure 7 Tribal territories according to Lyndall Ryan

Figure 8: Big River Tribe
according to Lyndall Ryan



(a) Territory



(b) Seasonal Movement

western mountains to Quamby Bluff, enclosing all the lake country.⁶³ While this is the only work that incorporates The Reserve into Big River territory and is thus a more logical territorial definition, no supporting evidence is provided. As with Jones, Ryan names a vague north route from Lake St Clair to Cradle Mountain and thence to Black Bluff.⁶⁴ Ryan provides neither evidence nor reasons for their visits.

Ryan identifies five Big River bands. (See Figure 8) The Pangerninghe were a west bank of the Derwent group, opposite its confluence with the Clyde, the Braylwunyer were between the lower Dee and Ouse Rivers, the Lairmairrener,⁶⁵ occupied the high country west of the Dee, around the Great Lake were the Luggermairrernerpairener and the Leenowwenne were located on the west bank of the Derwent around New Norfolk.⁶⁶ Ryan lists the Pangerninghe at the Clyde-Derwent confluence whereas Plomley tentatively locates them at Southport-Recherche Bay.⁶⁷ Robinson's diaries reveal three other bands from the Great Lake area: the Gorererpunmairinnerpairener, Noeberrerkownyerpairener and Torererpunmairinnerpairener.⁶⁸ Perhaps these were merely names given to the bands by other tribes. Working from and with the assistance of JB Walker, Roth named three other bands, the Liawulena near Lake St. Clair; the Tralakumbina who frequented the area near the confluence of the Nive and Derwent River while above the Ouse-Derwent confluence were the Tintumele Menenye. Oyster Bay tribe bands visited the Lake Country in summer for the sap of the cider gum and also en

⁶³Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. 26

⁶⁴Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. 27

⁶⁵alternative spelling Lairmairrener pairener

⁶⁶Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 973 for the Pangerninghe; p. 526 for Braylwunyer who were now dead & had occupied Wyld's Crag area; p. 970 for Lairmairrener on the west bank of the Ouse and p. 972 for Luggermairrernerpairener & Leenowwenne

⁶⁷Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, pp. 16 & 26; Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 973 & Plomley, *The Tasmanian Tribes* p. 28

⁶⁸Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 517 & 930 for Gorererpunmairinnerpairener, p. 973 for Noeberrerkownyerpairener & Torererpunmairinnerpairener p. 975

route to ochre mines. Perhaps they too extended their journey further westward to The Reserve.

Plomley criticised Jones for indiscriminately combining coastal and inland bands and for use of English rather than Aboriginal names. He bemoaned the absence of systematic historical vegetation studies which would give information about possible resources and thus the number of bands.⁶⁹ He suggested the following: Leenowwenne from New Norfolk west up the Derwent; Braylwunyer in the Upper Derwent north and northeast of Wylds Craig; the Luggermairrernepairrer and Torrerpunmairinnerpairener around Great Lake; Lairmairener Pairrener along Ouse River and possibly the Melukerdec on the Derwent's south bank above New Norfolk.

More recently John Taylor challenged the very concept of tribes. On the basis of philological analysis, he claimed to have discovered much about migration patterns to and within Tasmania. In categorically asserting that the 'Holocene Palawa people never developed beyond the clan structure ...',⁷⁰ Taylor denied the existence of tribes as cited above. Other opinions of Taylor's are also questionable. He locates the Big River group below the Central Plateau in the Ouse River catchment on the eve of European arrival,⁷¹ whereas much of the catchment is on the Plateau itself. While philological evidence may support the view that 'North Eastern speaking clans' may have retreated onto and ultimately perished on the Central Plateau,⁷² there is no supporting historical evidence.

⁶⁹Plomley, *The Tasmanian Tribes*, p. 15 for criticism and p. 9 for absence of studies; Plomley himself is not above criticism, estimating there were 57 'tribes', or bands in Jones' terminology but 46 tribes in Appendix 5: the Aboriginal Tribes in Tasmania, in *Friendly Mission*

⁷⁰JA Taylor, 'The Aboriginal discovery and colonisation of Tasmania', *PPTHRA* Vol 50(4) December 2003, p. 224

⁷¹Taylor, 'The Aboriginal discovery and colonisation of Tasmania', pp. 223-4

⁷²Taylor, 'The Aboriginal discovery and colonisation of Tasmania', pp. 223-4

Material culture and lifestyle

In discussing culture, it is assumed that Big River customs on the Plateau remained unaltered in The Reserve. In a near subsistence economy, the plant and animal species utilised largely reflected those in the remainder of the island.⁷³ Thus terrestrial and arboreal resources — macropods, rufus wallaby and Bennett's kangaroo, small mammals, brush and ringtail possums, and forester kangaroo — comprised the bulk of meat with lesser quantities of wombat, mice, native cats, platypus and thylacine. Birds, such as swans, tawny frogmouth, possibly wattle birds, the now-extinct emu and native hens, and their eggs were other food supplies. Observers, amateur and scientific, have noted the relative density of pademelon and wallaby⁷⁴ and possums at forest-grassland intersections found in many parts of The Reserve. Of plant species native bread, native potato, red berries and asparagus were common to the state, while manna gum, prickly mimosa and hakea were also used. Robinson and Betty Hiatt failed to identify other potential sources such as fern roots, fern trees and native carrot.⁷⁵ However, absence from Robinson's accounts does not indicate that resources were not used. He visited only the northern fringes of The Reserve and then mainly in winter. Predominance of animal compared with plant food can be related to the relative inconspicuousness of gathering and a larger number of males accompanying Robinson.⁷⁶

Food capture and preparation mirrored that found elsewhere. Hunting was largely the male domain while females and children gathered resources. Waddies

⁷³B Hiatt, 'The food quest and the economy of the Tasmanian Aborigines', *Oceania*, Vol 38, pp. 99-133, 190-219

⁷⁴R Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy and settlement in the Tasmanian Central Highlands*, National Parks and Wildlife Service Occasional Paper No. 8, Hobart, 1984, pp. 17-43 for general commentary; Basil Steers personal comment December 1988 for location of game; for all aspects of culture, see Plomley, 'Expedition to the Big River tribe, October-December 1831, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 482-586 and *passim* for remainder of Journals.

⁷⁵Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy*, p. 36. Native potato *Polyporus mylittae* & potato *Solanum laciniatum*

⁷⁶Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy*, pp. 37-8

despatched possum and wallabies, and the latter were also speared. Platypus were dug from their burrows then speared. In larger group hunts, fire drove animals to pre-ordained spots before being speared. On occasions, snares were also used. Most animals were thrown on fires to singe fur, and after the entrails were removed, coals were inserted to complete cooking. In contrast plant material was eaten without preparation.⁷⁷ In addition the group had access to coastal resources on its expeditions to other tribal territories, mainly the east but also the far north-west and west coasts.

Temporary habitation were lacustrine or riverine, quite often near vegetation transition zones such as marsh/woodland, with open country nearby. Thus primary materials — water, food, wood for fire and shelter — were close by. Regular tracks or pathways which crossed rivers at fords facilitated egress and ingress, such as in times of unusually severe weather. They also assisted cross-territory movement of tribes for peaceful, ceremonial or trade, and bellicose purposes.⁷⁸ While the precise location of these tracks in The Reserve is unknown, several locations have a degree of certainty. One access extended west from the Walls of Jerusalem towards Howells Plains and thence along the Mersey River to The Paddocks. From here there are several alternatives: to Wurragarra Shelter, ascending Wurragarra Creek north west to Lake Ayr and Pelion Plains or west-south-west onto higher country under Pelion East which provided access to the Mt Ossa region and even further west along the Murchison Valley. The Turrana rock shelter on the north-west edge of the Central Plateau, indicates another possibility: down the vallies of the Little Fisher and Fisher Rivers onto Dublin Plains and thence Howell's Plains.⁷⁹ Other alternatives traversed the Never-Never on the Upper Mersey and

⁷⁷Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy*, pp. 39-43; B Hiatt, 'The Food quest and ...', pp. 115-127

⁷⁸Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy*, pp. 48-9

⁷⁹H. Lourandos, '10,000 years in the Tasmanian Highlands', *Australian Archaeology*, Vol. 1, June 1993, pp. 39-47 at p. 45

crossing the southern and northern extremities of Traveller Range near Lake St Clair or at Du Cane Gap. The Parmerpar Meethaneer overhang suggests routes onto the February and then Pelion Plains rather than a westward ascent onto the high country between Barn Bluff and Pelion West. It is possible that access to the Forth high country may have come from north-east of Cradle Valley. Furthermore the Lake Macintosh site suggests possible westerly links with The Reserve. The open plains country east and west of the Derwent provided ready access from either the west and south-west and the east.

Reports about material culture are scanty. Newspaper editor Dr James Ross gave details of construction of bark huts resembling a 'tea-cup broken in half and set upon its mouth' on St Patrick's Plains. Bark stripped from trees was placed upright and roughly joined at the tops.⁸⁰ VDL Company surveyor Joseph Fossey sighted bark shelters on Hounslow Heath.⁸¹ It is probable that similar shelters were used throughout The Reserve given that Calder found newly erected huts on Painters Plains west of Mt King William in 1840. There are several rock overhangs suitable for shelter along the Overland Track, such as those across Pine Forest Moor and just outside The Reserve at Wurragarra Shelter and Parmerpar Meethaner. Well drained sites, protected from prevailing weather near river junctions and lakes, were favoured hut sites.

Both sexes wore a modicum of clothing, usually kangaroo skins, and a mixture of fat and grease was smeared over the body. Implements and weapons included a chisel-type stick about 18in long, spears from tea tree hardened over fires, waddies and various stone tools. Thumbnail scrapers, mainly associated with south-west

⁸⁰Dr J Ross, 'Recollections of a short excursion to Lake Echo in March 1823', *Hobart Town Almanack 1830*, p. 113, & for biographical details see 'James Ross', *ADB*, Vol. 2, pp. 396-7

⁸¹KR von Stieglitz, *A short history of Sheffield the Kentish Municipality and its Pioneers*, Launceston, [1951?] p. 21

Tasmania, but also at Wurragarra, appeared after 17,000.⁸² Cherty-hornfels have been found in Central Plateau quarries, such as Skittleballs Plain, Split Rock around Great Lake, London Marshes near Marlborough, and Arthur's Lake. These cherty-hornfel tools linked the region to the east coast where it is the most common material in flaked tools.⁸³ Both within and just outside The Reserve there are quarries at Mt Rufus and in the Forth valley north of Parmerpar Meethaner respectively. Tool kits tended to be small as befitted a highly mobile society. Unlike mainland Australia where the small tool tradition developed around 5,000BP, Tasmanian Aborigines remained within the 'Core Tool and Scraper Tradition'. While steep edged scrapers diminished in size, and thus became more efficient, microlithic tools and hafting did not develop.

Rhys Jones coined the term 'firestick farming' to describe the process whereby fire created and maintained open grasslands.⁸⁴ The Reserve contains examples such as Cradle, Pinestone, Pine and Cuvier Vallies and Pelion Plains, and some much favoured by European livestock. Subsequently, controversy has arisen over the relative importance of anthropogenic and natural factors in creation of treeless plains. Underlying basaltic soils, cold air drainage and low temperatures combined with low rainfall have contributed to some areas such as Monaro Plains. There has been insufficient research in The Reserve to determine the relative proportions and whether Aborigines used fire purposefully or were, in George Seddon's terms,

⁸²J Flood, *The Moth Hunters: Aboriginal prehistory of Australian Alps*, Canberra, 1980, p. 275

⁸³Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy*, p. 78, Walker, 'Some Notes on the Tribal Divisions...', p. 274, H Lourandos, 'Dispersal of activities — the east Tasmanian Aboriginal sites', *PPRST*, Vol. 102, 1968, p. 45

⁸⁴R Jones, 'Fire-stick Farming', *Australian Natural History*, Vol. 16, 1978-80, pp. 224-8. Others such as botanist Alan Cunningham earlier used the concept of firestick farming, see J Flood, *The Moth Hunters*, p. 20. Possible impacts of impact on vegetation can be inferred from RC Ellis & I Thomas, 'Pre-Settlement and Post-Settlement Vegetational Change and Probable Aboriginal Influences in a Highland Forested Area in Tasmania', pp. 199-214 in K Frawley & N Semple, *Australia's Ever Changing Forests*, Canberra, 1988, especially p. 204 for secondary succession in rainforest

peripatetic pyromaniacs,⁸⁵ although most accounts prefer the former. Fire had myriad uses: clearing paths, domestic cooking, warmth, communication, protection against evil spirits, ceremonial and as an offensive weapon. Perhaps most important was sequential burning to create patchwork conditions which increased opportunities for hunting and gathering.⁸⁶

Robinson observed trees, human figures, and representative motifs, squares and circles, inside bark huts near Arthur's Lakes, while Calder recorded hunting scenes in Painters Plains' huts.⁸⁷ Government surveyor Thomas Scott noted bark drawings of cart wheels, bullocks and drivers, 'all distinctly depicted in their rude, but interesting manner' at the Vale of Belvoir.⁸⁸ Patterns on dolerite rocks near Marys Tarn, Central Plateau raises the possibility of similar finds further westward in The Reserve. These carvings are representative of western Aboriginal culture because they are not found in eastern Tasmania. Archaeologist Michael Morwood in his study of Aboriginal art in Australia has identified two pertinent phases: from first arrival to mid-Holocene, ie 5,000BP a period of relative uniformity in rock art and a time of cultural efflorescence in technique and artistic variation from the mid-Holocene until arrival of Europeans.⁸⁹ Thus it would seem that most Tasmanian rock art, particularly that at Mount Cameron, is part of the Panaramitee style of 'deeply pecked, patinated engravings emphasising geometric and track motifs'.⁹⁰

⁸⁵For this debate see G Seddon, *Searching for the Snowy: an environmental history*, St Leonards, New South Wales, 1994, p. 295; Flood, *The Moth Hunters*, pp. 19-22, R Jones, 'Fire-stick Farming' & Jackson, 'Fire and the Flora of Tasmania', pp. 50-55. The term 'peripatetic pyromaniacs' was used earlier by NB Tindale.

⁸⁶For general discussion of uses of fire on the lower Plateau surface, see T Jetson, 'A history of fire in the Bronte region', *PPTHRA*, Vol. 40 (4), 1993, pp. 170-182.

⁸⁷Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 542 (6 December 1831).

⁸⁸von Stieglitz, *A short history of Sheffield*, p. 21 & for doubts about authenticity see Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania*, p. 137.

⁸⁹MJ Morwood, *Visions from the Past: the archaeology of Australian Aboriginal Art*, Sydney, 2002, p. 14.

⁹⁰Morwood, *Visions from the Past*, p. 57.

Other rock art techniques include abrading, scratching and hammering.⁹¹ The bark paintings involve simple figurative styles with crude depictions such as standardised front view of humans and animals.⁹² The absence of limestone caves makes it improbable that hand stencils such as have been found in South West caves will be discovered in The Reserve.

Aboriginal attitudes towards the afterlife are sketchy. Sometimes the dead were buried in hollow trees, but the nature of associated ceremonies is unknown as is the belief in the supernatural.⁹³ Initiation ceremonies, cicatrices, dance and music were known but in the absence of detailed accounts speculation replaces fact. Probably ritual was central to life providing intellectual, social, artistic and perhaps economic needs.⁹⁴ AG Sargona's work on Toolumbunner in Gog Range near Molc Creek⁹⁵ examines local and international significances of pomatum or ochre. Uses include religious ceremonies, medication and body ornamentation. If The Reserve was mainly a transit zone, then it is unlikely that large scale gatherings for major ceremonies would have occurred, as elsewhere these tended to coincide with periods of maximum food capacity. Supporting this likelihood is the fact that the greater the distance travelled to gather food and water, the less time was available for leisure and ceremonial purposes.⁹⁶ Another determining factor was the limited storage capacity for food surpluses.

The Historical Record

⁹¹R Edwards, 'Art and Aboriginal Prehistory' pp. 356-367 in DJ Mulvaney & J Golson, (eds) *Aboriginal Man and Environment in Australia*, Canberra, 1971, p. 359

⁹²Morwood, *Visions from the Past*, p. 59

⁹³Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 508 (8 November 1831)

⁹⁴R Jones, 'The Tasmanian Paradox', in R Wright (ed) *Stone Tools as Cultural Markers: change, evolution and complexity*, Canberra, 1971, p. 201

⁹⁵AG Sargona, 'The Quest for Red Gold', pp. 8-18 in AG Sargona, *Bruising the Red Earth: ochre mining and ritual in Aboriginal Tasmania*, Melbourne, 1994

⁹⁶Tindale, *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia*, pp. 9-10

John Beamont, on his westward travels across the Plateau, provided the earliest records of Aboriginal occupation when in December 1819 he saw 'several Fires, but never fell in with the natives'.⁹⁷ VDL Company officials provided corroborative evidence for either frequent occupation or temporary sojourns. While searching for a route for the VDL Company Road from Launceston to Emu Bay in April 1827, Fossey saw a cluster of huts on Hounslow Heath, to the northwest of Cradle Valley and 'distinctly heard their call for the assembling of their forces'.⁹⁸ The next year, fellow Company surveyor Henry Hellyer observed huts, burnt countryside and footholds in trees in the Surrey Hills area and near the Canning River. Between Eldon Range and Cradle he noted small patches of ground had been fired. Government Surveyor Thomas Scott, provided further proof — art work on bark.⁹⁹ Robinson's encounter with a family near Barn Bluff in 1836 could have provided much but, alas, the pertinent journal, if it existed, remains unlocated.¹⁰⁰ In 1841 Aborigines attacked the Middlesex station¹⁰¹ and further sightings persist into the mid-1840s. From Mt Roland Calder noted 'several fires' in supposedly 'quite uninhabited' and seldom visited country to the south.¹⁰² About the same time Pitt of Hunting Ground and a party led by Marlborough District Constable Edwin Lascelles saw footprints of about 10 people and recently occupied native huts in their travels towards the Mersey-Forth country.¹⁰³

⁹⁷HRA 3, III, p. 344 Examination of Mr Beamont by Commissioner Bigge

⁹⁸For biographical details see E Pretyman, 'Joseph Fossey', *ADB* Vol. 1, pp. 406-7 & Von Stieglitz, *A short history of Sheffield ...*, p. 21

⁹⁹Von Stieglitz, *A short history of Sheffield ...*, p. 21 & for biographical details, GH Crawford, 'Thomas Scott', *ADB*, Vol 2, p. 429 Further details of this trip. will be found in Chapter 2

¹⁰⁰Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 926-7

¹⁰¹*Cornwall Chronicle* 17 April 1841. Thanks to Dr N Haygarth for this reference

¹⁰²Calder to Bicheno 8 August 1847, CSO 24/24/579 p. 8

¹⁰³Calder to Bicheno 8 August 1847, CSO 24/24/579 p. 8. Lascelles was the stepson of Thomas Lascelles who was removed from the Police Magistracy by Arthur. His father was the colourful Denis McCarty. Lascelles was District Constable 1839-1843. He sighted these footprints while in pursuit of Martin Cash, see E Fitzsymonds, *Mortmain*, Hobart, 1977, pp. 104-7. Harry Stanley related the story that Howells Plains was discovered by Constable Lascelles of Marlborough in pursuit of Cash, Cavenagh and Jones, 'The Tramp, From Gad's Hill to the West Coast', *The Colonist*, 19 May 1888

Information from the south provides evidence of Aboriginal presence in the area. Macquarie Harbour escapees, Goodwin and Connelly, noted Aboriginal fires and burnt countryside and two groups of natives, probably a hearth group, in the upper Gordon in 1828. Five years later Goodwin and surveyor John Darke discovered huts and burnt ground in the Vale of Rasselas.¹⁰⁴ A year earlier, Surveyor William Sharland sighted huts near Nive River and burnt plains south of St Clair.¹⁰⁵ Calder, surveyor and historian, heard natives, sighted huts and spears, and discovered decaying kangaroo flesh in the Mt Arrowsmith-Frenchmans Cap area in December 1840. Contemporaneously Aborigines escaped from a cart while being taken to Marlborough.¹⁰⁶ Near Coal Hill in 1859 Government geologist Charles Gould again observed burnt country and native huts, the latter showing their durability.¹⁰⁷

Re-interpretation and archaeological discoveries

Thus far this account seems to tell of an 'unchanging land and an unchanging people'. Reality was far different. Aborigines occupied different areas over time as climate and vegetation changed, tools changed shape, with some, such as the bone awl, disappearing and diets altered, notably the disappearance of scale fish. To help understand this process, major changes over the last 40,000 years must be recognised. In general terms the Pleistocene age, 40,000 to 10,000 BP, was much colder and drier than today. Temperature and rainfall decreased until the last glacial maximum occurred around 18,000 BP when sea levels reached their nadir. Before 30,000, conditions were cool and moist but as it became drier and colder, open

¹⁰⁴Goodwin's statement in CSO 1/276/6658, & for Darke, R Gowland, *Darke of the Peaks*, Hobart, 1976, p. 25

¹⁰⁵WS Sharland, 'Rough notes of a journal of expedition to the westward in 1832', *TPP* 1861, No 16, pp. 5 & 9

¹⁰⁶Calder, 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', pp. 419-20 & Calder to Colonial Secretary, 25 January 1841, CSO 8/30/489 p 206; for escape, Calder to Bicheno 8 August 1847, CSO 24/24/579 p. 3

¹⁰⁷C Gould, 'A report of exploration of the Western Country', *TPP*, [H of A], 1860, No 4

grassland steppes replaced sclerophyl and rain forest. Temperatures between 5° and 8° lower than today helped produce 'scree, blockfield, blockstreams and gelifluction deposits on high ground.'¹⁰⁸ South-west caves, initially thought to have been occupied about 23 to 20,000 BP, have now been dated to about 35,000, as has Parmerpar Meethaner. While occurring at different times, all sites were abandoned by 11,000 BP during the post glacial advance of forests. Alpine conifers, sclerophyl heath, subalpine mixed woodland and temperate rainforest replaced grasslands and herbfields.¹⁰⁹ Cosgrove, Allen and Marshall have challenged this scenario, suggesting that grasslands occurred only in patches on relatively infertile soils and thus provided only limited grazing for sedentary wallabies.¹¹⁰ It appears that occupation, based on Bennett's wallaby, was short term and seasonal rather than permanent. As such, it lasted 20,000 years.¹¹¹ By 18,000 BP, glaciers covered much of the Central Plateau and Upper Mersey Valley while in the north-west there were extensive grasslands containing swamps and shallow lakes with some areas of open eucalypt woodlands. Steppe grasslands were widespread in the midlands.¹¹²

Over the last 55,000 to 60,000 years there have been three periods when lower sea levels, 55-60 metres below present, permitted migration across the Bassian Plains connecting Tasmania to the mainland. The last two opportunities occurred between 37,000 to 29,000 BP and 25,000 to about 12,000 BP.¹¹³ Dating of sites indicates that the former was probably the period when man first reached an enlarged Tasmanian peninsula. From about 15,000 sea levels gradually rose until about

¹⁰⁸E Colhoun, 'Late Quaternary environment of Tasmania as a backdrop to man's occupance', *Records of the Queen Victoria Museum*, No 61, 1978, pp. 1-12

¹⁰⁹Colhoun, 'Late Quaternary environment ...' p. 7

¹¹⁰R Cosgrove, J Allen & B Marshall, 'Palaeo-ecology and Pleistocene human occupation in south-central Tasmania', *Antiquity*, Vol. 64 March 1990, pp. 62-3

¹¹¹H Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers: New perspectives in Australian prehistory*, Cambridge 1997, pp. 245-250

¹¹²Colhoun, 'Late Quaternary environment ...' p. 1

¹¹³Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, p. 244

5,000, when modern day levels were reached. Postglacial changes first severed the Otways-King Island ridge and only later, around 12,000, was the Wilson's Promontory-Flinders Island route submerged.¹¹⁴ Consequences were far reaching: Tasmanian Aborigines became totally isolated from developments in technology and arrival of new species such as the dingo, and became for the first time an insular culture. Debate continues whether Aboriginal culture atrophied to produce the 'world's simplest technology', or was able to exploit new habitats.¹¹⁵ A less frequently considered reason for absence of innovation are potential drawbacks such as increased labour levels associated with new technology.

Post 1950 reinterpretation of Aboriginal society was inevitable. The older environmental-determinist view postulated a static culture and a homeostatic population. From occupying the lowest level of the evolutionary ladder as passive inhabitants of and controlled by long term environmental changes, Aborigines are now regarded as a dynamic force manipulating the environment to suit socio-economic and cultural needs. Use of fire to expand production in a complex resource management process illustrates this dynamism. Now, change and trends, long and short term, local, regional and continental, are examined under a systems approach. Debate centres on the relative importance of external factors and internal dynamics.¹¹⁶ Some contend that a concentration of resources led to more intense exploitation which encouraged relatively concentrated settlement whereas more dispersed resources results in less intense exploitation and a more transient occupation.¹¹⁷ Obviously the latter scenario is more applicable to The Reserve,

¹¹⁴J Jennings, 'Sea Level changes and Land links' in Mulvaney & Golson, *Aboriginal man and the environment in Australia*, p. 9

¹¹⁵Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, pp. 274-78; R Jones 'Man as an element of a continental fauna: the case of the sundering of the Basian Bridge', pp. 317-85 in J Allen, J Golson & R Jones (eds) *Sunda and Sahul*, London, 1977; R Jones, 'The Tasmanian paradox', pp. 189-204 in RVS Wright (ed.) *Stone Tools as Cultural Markers: change, evolution and complexity*, Canberra, 1977

¹¹⁶Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter Gatherers*, pp. 1-3 & 9-29

¹¹⁷Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter Gatherers*, pp. 12-3 & 73

thus linking the Big River more closely to the dispersed culture of the east than the west coast.

The historical record and further archaeological research suggested other bands, unknown to white man, might have existed and tribal territories may have varied. Tasmanian-born and now Monash academic Richard Cosgrove, who made the first systematic archaeological study of montane areas, established a predictive model for occupation of sub-alpine environments.¹¹⁸ Cosgrove questioned previous hypotheses, importantly Jones' view of an unoccupied western plateau, and Bowdler's assertion that alpine occupation depended on ending reliance on coastal resources and developing reliable high country food resources. Following re-evaluation of the occupation of the New England Tablelands, Cosgrove believed that the Tasmanian highlands' diversity and abundance of resources and strategies for prolonged occupation implied adaptation to sub-alpine conditions. He traced beginnings of occupation to circa 9,000 BP. Although there was no evidence that Big River territory extended beyond the Traveller Range, Cosgrove suggests that it was 'along the boundary from Lake King William to Traveller Range north to Western Bluff taking in the highest mountains of the region, Mt Rufus and Mt Jerusalem.'¹¹⁹ Again, his field work should have ensured greater precision as the Traveller Range stretches from the southern end of Lake St Clair to the Mersey river. Two hundred and fifty known sites on the northwestern Central Plateau, indicate a usage of the area which upholds Cosgrove's claims over Jones's. Most sites were located to give ready access to resources of forests, lakes and rivers, and to provide shelter from unpredictable weather, while quarries at Split Rock and The Skittleballs provided material for rock implements.¹²⁰ Additional sites dated

¹¹⁸Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy and settlement*, p. 57

¹¹⁹Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy and settlement*, pp. 15-16

¹²⁰Cosgrove, *Aboriginal economy and settlement*, pp. 87-8; Cosgrove, 'Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in the Central Highlands, Tasmania' in S Sullivan & S Bowdler (eds.) *Site*

between 8,000 and 5,000 BP possibly indicated wider distribution during more favourable warmer wetter conditions.¹²¹ Lourandos's discovery of stone implements at Lake Augusta further supports Aboriginal ability to occupy alpine moorlands, similar to those in The Reserve.¹²²

La Trobe University was instrumental in more far-reaching discoveries from the mid-1980s. On the Shannon River upstream from its confluence with the Ouse, Cosgrove, located a large sandstone shelter, ORS 7 which was occupied between circa 31,000 and 2,450 BP, while to the west, the Mackintosh site, dates from 17,000 to 15,000 BP.¹²³ The latter represents the most northerly presence of Darwin glass thus linking the site with the south-west.¹²⁴ The ORS site indicates settlement not long after Aborigines first crossed into Tasmania, while the Mackintosh signifies occupation after the glacial maximum. At ORS 7, occupation continued into the Holocene, probably because rainforest colonisation did not occur here because of drier conditions.¹²⁵ Given the cooler conditions and need to forage a wider range of resources over a larger area, Lourandos suggested that the Big River territory during the Pleistocene is likely to have been larger than in late Holocene.¹²⁶

Rock shelters at Wurragarra, The Paddocks in the Upper Mersey Valley, and the Parmerpar Meethaner, Forth Valley are more important than the Central Plateau sites. After being shown the site by Peter Sims, bushwalker and conservationist, in

Surveys and Significance Assessment in Australian Archaeology, Canberra, 1984, p. 97 discusses finds such as those along the Pine River Valley, western Central Plateau

¹²¹Cosgrove, 'Aboriginal Settlement Patterns in the Central Highlands, pp. 88-89

¹²²Lourandos, 'Dispersal of activities ...', p. 42

¹²³Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, p. 248; R Cosgrove, *The illusion of Riches: scale, resolution and explanation in Tasmanian Pleistocene human behaviour*, Oxford, 1995

¹²⁴R Cosgrove, 'Late Pleistocene behavioural variation and time trends: the case from Tasmania', *Archaeology of Oceania*, Vol 30, 1995, p. 92

¹²⁵Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, p. 252

¹²⁶Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, p. 253

1968, Harry Lourandos excavated this sandstone shelter in 1982. Lying inside the Pleistocene glaciation zone by about 20kms, Lourandos discovered two phases of occupation: 11,000 to 9,000 BP and 3,500 BP. The initial phase occurred almost immediately after deglaciation when forests recolonised highlands, ie between 11,500 and 9,500.¹²⁷ In the intervening period, 8,000 to 4,000 in moist warm climates, forests became more widespread and dense. From 4,000 to 3,500, as the climate cooled and became drier, close canopied forests contracted.¹²⁸ Fire stick farming became more effective and produced more resource opportunities in the mix of rain and sclerophyll forests compared with the fewer species located in rain forest. Re-occupation coincided with a time of increased sites as fire encroached on rain forests in the far north-west and west coasts respectively.¹²⁹ The site represents a hunting camp which was used more intensively in the more recent time. Taphonomic analysis revealed Bennett's wallaby, pademelon, bettong, and possum were victims of human predation with grey kangaroo and wombat more recent additions to diet. The presence of stone similar to that on the west coast reveals a widening of trade links, thus supporting the hypothesis of recent economic expansion. Re-examination in 1992 failed to find evidence of earlier use and confirmed earlier findings. Archaeologists Allen and Porch are unsure whether the terminal Pleistocene and late Holocene usages were "transitory" and "sporadic" ... [or] "regular" and "intensive".¹³⁰

Occupation of Parmerparr Meethaner traversed major climatic events related to the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM) and the Pleistocene/Holocene transition.¹³¹

¹²⁷Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, pp. 262-266 & Lourandos, '10,000 years in the Tasmanian Highlands', *passim*

¹²⁸Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, p. 256

¹²⁹Lourandos, *Continent of Hunter-Gatherers*, pp. 260-62 & 265

¹³⁰J Allen & N Porch, 'Wurragarra Rockshelter' in Allen (ed) *Report of the Southern Forests Archaeological Project Vol 1*, p. 215

¹³¹R Cosgrove, 'Late Pleistocene behavioural variation', p. 83 & R Cosgrove & T Murray, 'The Management of archaeological resources in forest areas', Tasmanian Forest Research Council

Although the Forth Valley was not subject to glaciation during the LGM, the site lay within three kms of glaciers flowing from the Cradle area and the ice covered Central Plateau lay to the east. As with south-west sites thumbnail scrapers and local artefactual raw materials such as quartz and hornfels were used.¹³² Faunal remains are mainly those of small to medium size with no megafauna identified.¹³³ Major differences with the south-west are the absence of Bennett's wallaby and Darwin glass.¹³⁴ Although located in a drier site than Wurragarra, both share a similar Holocene history. The almost continuous occupation since the probable arrival of Aborigines makes this site extremely significant.

There have been few archaeological expeditions within The Reserve itself. In Cradle Valley Major RE Smith discovered flakes at Mt Kate with others found elsewhere in the Valley. Hunter-snarer George Bott claimed that Aborigines sharpened tools near Mt Doris.¹³⁵ The Mt Rufus Aboriginal quarry is probably the oldest known site, with formal identification being provided by Sutherland in 1972 and geologist Kevin Kiernan in 1985. The latter also discovered tools and numerous stone flakes on the slopes of the East Rufus Cirque and East Rufus Moraine respectively and over 30 additional sites south of the park boundary.¹³⁶ Cosgrove's survey on the Traveller, 1984, has been mentioned and Ranson identified four sites north of The Reserve boundary a year earlier. In the south, TE Burns found artefacts north of the Narcissus.¹³⁷

Annual Reports, 1990-91, 1991-92, 1992-93. Thanks to Dr Tim Murray & Dr R Cosgrove for information about these sources.

¹³²Cosgrove, 'Late Pleistocene behavioural variation ...', p. 92

¹³³Cosgrove, 'Late Pleistocene behavioural variation ...', p. 94

¹³⁴Cosgrove, 'Late Pleistocene behavioural variation ...', p. 100

¹³⁵George Bott personal comment 11 October 1980

¹³⁶K Kiernan, 'Late Cainozoic glaciation and mountain geomorphology in the Central Highlands of Tasmania,' PhD (Geography), University of Tasmania, 1987, pp. 175, 224, 315 & map p. 494

¹³⁷I Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites along the Overland Track, Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park,' Report to the Tasmanian Dept of Lands, Parks and Wildlife, p. 6

Ian Thomas conducted the most comprehensive survey of the area in 1987 but confined his activities to the Overland Track corridor.¹³⁸ He suggested that 'it is possible that most if not all of the present park area was unoccupied during the Pleistocene,' a valid conclusion given that much of the area was under permanent ice or snow cover at the time, and unlike the south west, there were no limestone caves. He adds the proviso that 'Any occupation would almost certainly have been seasonal, conditional on the availability of food and shelter.'¹³⁹ Artefacts were scattered along the length of the track, 25 sites, with most occurring in the Pelion Plains and Narcissus Valley. These offered protection, water, wood, grasslands and forests and lacustrine environments. These two areas have site density equivalent to protected valleys on lower surfaces of the Central Plateau. The absence of sites in the Kia Ora/Pinestone Valley area probably reflect the restricted nature of his survey. The low maximum artefact number, four per site, the presence of only one rocktype per site and absence of hammer and grinding stones all probably indicate ephemeral use. Most sites were located below 900m and maximised exposure to the sun.¹⁴⁰ Thomas discounted the popular view that the Overland Track coincided with an earlier Aboriginal path and proposed that travel was not across moor country but up and down river vallies with occasional trip to elevated regions. On their trips westward, Thomas proposed that sheltered Plateau river vallies were traversed to south-west of the Walls of Jerusalem, then either to The Paddocks and Lake Ayr or across the February, Borradaile and Middlesex Plains, past Cradle to Surrey Hills.¹⁴¹ Most of the argument is plausible but crossing from Borradaile to Middlesex poses topographic difficulties. Occupants of sites, possibly Ling Roth's Liawulena, at Laughing Jack Lagoon and Navarre Plains, probably did not venture north of the Narcissus Valley over the Du Cane Gap, —uartz materials from Pelion

¹³⁸Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', p. 9

¹³⁹Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', p. 5

¹⁴⁰Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', pp. 9-16

¹⁴¹Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', pp. 16-18

are not found south of Pelion Gap and homfels from Narcissus are not located north of Du Cane gap. The Pinestone/Kia Ora region probably is the dividing ground with only those venturing further to the central west around Eldon Range utilising this country. Given his study's limitations, Thomas suggests valuable information could be obtained by studying overhangs in the Du Cane Range and Olympus, beach deposits and alluvial terraces along rivers draining the Pelion country. If material was dated, then a cultural time frame could be developed using known dates from the south-west and Wurragarra.¹⁴²

H Du Cros 1982, disputed Thomas' claim that there had been no transport of stone materials by finding stone materials from Pelion at the northern end of Lake St Clair.¹⁴³ This may suggest either trade and travel or both between the areas and thus some connecting overland link.

Conclusion

Since 1977 dramatic findings of occupation of south-west Tasmania and the Upper Forth Valley from about 35,000 BP have forced rethinking about Aboriginal occupation of Tasmania and specific montane locations such as The Reserve. Prior to this, Jones claimed that at the Pleistocene glacial maximum 'the bulk of what is now the island of Tasmania was inhospitable to human occupation. The central highlands supported ice sheets above c. 600m in the wet southwest'.¹⁴⁴ Approximately 1/5 of the state was ice covered, with the most extensive icecap including Du Cane Range, Cradle Mountain Plateau and northwestern Central Plateau. Jones' avowal was somewhat weakened by the belief that Tasmanian

¹⁴²Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', p. 19

¹⁴³H Du Cros, 'An Archaeological Survey to examine the nature and distribution of Aboriginal Sites in areas affected by Erosion', 1992 cited in M Byers, 'Tourism and bushwalking in the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park', MA (Geography & Environmental Studies), University of Tasmania, 1996, pp. 45-6

¹⁴⁴Jones, 'Man as an element of a continental fauna: the case of the sundering of the Bassian Bridge,' p. 336

mountains 'supported more than a slender or transient population during the full glacial period.'¹⁴⁵

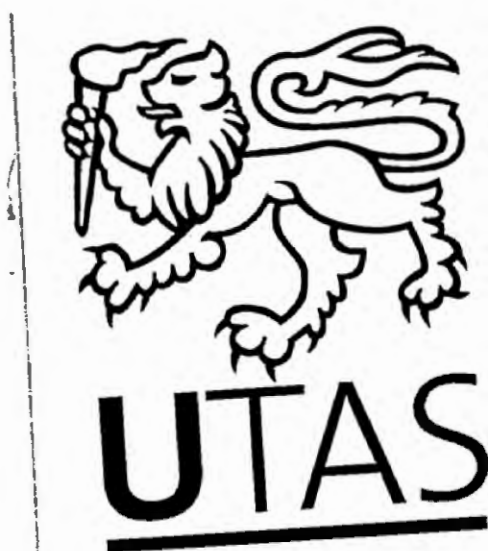
The view that The Reserve was uninhabited in prehistoric Tasmania has been discredited. Findings from excavations at Lake Macintosh, ORS 7 and especially Parmerpar Meethaner indicate that Aborigines occupied the fringes of The Reserve during the Pleistocene and may possibly have been transient visitors to higher altitudes. This pattern most probably persisted through the LGM until the terminal Pleistocene/early Holocene transition. Then longer occupation, probably seasonal, of The Reserve commenced and then increased from the time of deglaciation and forest colonisation. Evidence from Warragarra supports this for the country north of and including Pelion Plains. Southward, the lower altitude and more extensive plain country may have encouraged earlier visits. Thomas suggested that it was not till 5,000 BP that occupation was 'substantial rather than ephemeral'¹⁴⁶ but evidence from the north suggests an earlier date. The most frequent visitors are likely to have been the Big River and North-West tribes with occasional forays by Western and Oyster Bay groups. Evidence from the 1840s indicates the possibility of now unknown bands or remnants of existing groups being transhumant visitors.

The Reserve was both significant in its own right because of arboreal, lacustrine and terrestrial resources which fed and sheltered the new arrivals and, in more recent times, as a stepping stone or transit zone for other areas, notably ochre mines and coastal resources. Successful adaptation of alpine and sub-alpine areas depended on maximising and extending use of resources by regular firing vegetation and barking of trees. At present materials from about 35 sites and two skulls from the Lake St Clair area collected by Durmont D'Urville in the *Astrolabe* and *Zelee*

¹⁴⁵Jones, 'Man as an element of a continental fauna: the case of the sundering of the Bassian Bridge,' p. 337

¹⁴⁶Thomas, 'A Survey of Aboriginal Sites ...', p. 5

expedition of 1826-29 and placed in the Paris Collection,¹⁴⁷ constitute extant overseas material evidence. Written material is not substantial: Robinson's diary tantalises with hints, while convicts, explorers and free settlers comment on the obvious but little else. Potential knowledge from existing and known sites is circumscribed by the decision of former Parks and Wildlife Minister John Cleary to return materials to Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council prior to a complete study.¹⁴⁸ Predominantly our information derives from the fringes rather than from within the area, a position likely to continue unless the Aboriginal Land Council alters its position.



¹⁴⁷Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania*, p. 196

¹⁴⁸Allen & Porch, 'Wurragarra Rockshelter', p. 216

CHAPTER TWO

EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY: FROM AFAR AND CLOSE-UP

1803-1837

With by far the largest proportion of emigrants, the acquisition of land — a *territorial possession* — is the alpha and omega of all their aims — the object of all their thousand-and-one days — ¹

Confinement to the immediate environs of pioneer settlements was only a temporary phase. Curiosity, both general and specific, soon overcame that topographical myopia and desire for security which afflicted early European settlements Australia-wide. This prelude to wider exploration, and discovery of major topographic features, lasted till the arrival of significant numbers of free settlers during Lieut.-Governor Sorell's rule, 1817-1824. Free settlers, government officials, bushrangers and hunters ventured around the fringes of and onto the Central Plateau. Curiosity, desire for pastures and native game, and a refuge from the law motivated these groups. In the next phase aspects of pastoralism, either removing or suppressing perceived problems such as bushrangers and convict escapees, and Aborigines, or seeking grazing country, predominated. As well curiosity about the unknown remained a motivation. Both the government and the VDL Company were salient, with private settlers playing a supporting role. Accounts of distant sightings of and visits to The Reserve will be described and analysed, partly in terms of the Romantic attitudes towards mountains in particular and landscapes in general.

¹D Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, Hobart, 1973, p. 182 First published in *The Colonial Magazine*, 1840-1

In discussing exploration and discovery, scientist and explorer, Sir Paul de Strzelecki's words are apposite. He commented that as Van Demonian pastoralists in finding and settling Australia Felix

kept their knowledge secret, and used it merely for their own benefit and convenience, they can now only boast of their good fortune in having found the country, but not of the honour of having discovered it.²

News of official exploration was available to society at large. In contrast, unofficial discoveries were restricted initially to felons, fugitives and friends, and sometimes, but not always, details filtered to the wider world. Historian and settler James Fenton emphasised the practical, opining that 'Discoveries, however, are of no practical benefit unless they are followed up, and their values ascertained'.³ Yet the two worlds intersected, often for mutual benefit, as when Macquarie Harbour escapee James Goodwin accompanied surveyor John Darke⁴ in pursuit of bushrangers and searching for Aborigines.⁵ For their reward convicts were offered tickets-of-leave and/or cash. Secrecy was abetted by illiteracy and by stock-keepers' greed — they could be 'jealous of a neighbour, ... [and] averse to inform[ing] a stranger of the unlocated land'.⁶ Exact routes were almost impossible to chart

²P Strzelecki, *Physical description of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land: accompanied by a geological map, sections and diagrams, and figures of the organic remains*, London, 1845, pp. 37-8; for general discussion of 'exploring' see C Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, Launceston, 1980, p. 5. Binks arrives at a similar conclusion citing availability of records as the criterion. Thus George Augustus Robinson cannot be classified as an explorer. S Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', MA Thesis, (History), University of Tasmania, 1959, pp. 216-7 holds similar views

³J Fenton, *Bush Life in Tasmania*, London, 1891, p. 115. Renowned historian Sir Keith Hancock, *Discovering Monaro: A study of Man's impact on his environment*, Cambridge, 1972, p. 10, differs asserting that 'discovery of any 'Australian region is not a once-for-all achievement, but rather is a continuing effort, whose end — if ever there is an end — still lies far beyond sight.'

⁴R Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, Hobart, 1976, p. 14; John Beamont's use of local guide, Jones, who had previously circumnavigated the "large Lake" is another example, Beamont's evidence to Commissioner Bigge, 10 May 1820 in *HRA* 3, III, p. 344

⁵John Danver assisted in the search for bushrangers and Aborigines. See this chapter & E Fitzsymonds, *Looking Glass for Tasmania: letters petitions and other manuscripts relating to Van Diemen's Land 1808-1845*, Adelaide, 1980, p. 163

⁶*HTG* 15 April 1826

because the few contemporary maps reflected topographical ignorance. Exacerbating this was the tendency, as Edward Curr so acutely noted, for 'Persons walking in the bush often unintentionally [to] over-reckon the distance they travel in the day by more than half.'⁷

From Afar

Even before European settlement the Derwent River was an artery to the unknown for both the English and French. Not knowing that Sub-Lieutenant Willaumez of the D'Entrecasteaux expedition had discovered the Derwent, in 1793 Captain John Hayes bestowed the name, Derwent, after the river close to the family home in Cumberland.⁸ Then five years and a decade elapsed before circumnavigators Bass and Flinders and John Bowen, commander of the Risdon settlement, followed in their wake. The limits of the known were the falls above New Norfolk.⁹

In early February 1804 surveyor James Meehan, followed the Derwent upstream to near the present-day Meadowbank Dam before travelling eastwards towards the Jordan River. Observations about suitability for cultivation, topographical features

⁷Curr 5 January 1829 in A Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company 1825-1842*, Launceston, 1958, p. 39

⁸For Hayes see G Mortimer, *Observations and remarks made during a voyage: to the islands of Teneriffe, Amsterdam, Maria's Islands near Van Diemen's Land; ... in the brig Mercury, commanded by John Henry Cox*, London, 1791; I Lee (ed), *Commodore Sir John Hayes: His Voyage and Life 1767-1831*, London, 1912 & M Roc, 'Sir John Hayes', *ADB*, Vol 1, p. 527; for D'Entrecasteaux see NJB Plomley & J Piard-Bernier, *The General: the visits of the expedition led by Bruny D'Entrecasteaux to Tasmanian waters in 1792 and 1793*, Launceston, 1993, pp. 208-10

⁹For Bowen, see Bowen to King 20 September 1803, *HRA* 3, I, pp. 197-8. In 1834 Hügel described the Falls 'no more than rapids flowing over rocks lying about 2 feet below the surface of the water ... The fall is so minimal that the tide is perceptible above the rapids' in *Baron Charles von Hügel, New Holland Journal, November 1833-October 1834* (trans. & ed.) D Clark, Melbourne, 1994, p. 119 & Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 184, The Falls were 'merely moderately shallow rapids, with some few rocks, which occasionally present their points above the surface'.

and weather befitted a practical man as did the prose.¹⁰ Botanist Robert Brown, mineralogist Adolarus Humphrey and surgeon Jacob Mountgarrett made two trips in March that year. On these trips they claimed to have travelled forty and eighty miles respectively. If the distances were accurate, they would have reached the Hamilton-Ouse area where 'there was an extensive plain of very few trees'¹¹ on the first journey and between the Dee and Nive Rivers on the latter more ambitious attempt 'to go to the head of the river'.¹² The latter is dubious as Brown noted that the 'River considerably diminished ... not more than 10 yards in breadth',¹³ while Humphreys' endpoint, 'we left it among high Mountains', was even more vague. Historian RW Giblin believed with distances exaggerated, they were between the Clyde and the Ouse.¹⁴ In January 1806 Knopwood, assistant surgeon Bowden and Surveyor George Harris travelled up river about 40 miles but added little to existing knowledge.¹⁵ There was no follow-up to these Derwent excursions despite the finds of suitable grazing country as the colony's few free settlers were accommodated close to Hobart Town or The Camp.

¹⁰For background see TM Perry 'James Meehan' in *ADB*, Vol. 2, pp. 219-20, for this journey see P Tardif, *John Bowen's Hobart: the beginnings of European settlement in Tasmania*, Hobart, 2004, 109-111, A Jones, *Backsight A history of surveying in colonial Tasmania*, Hobart, 1989, pp. 4-7

¹¹M Nicholls (ed) *The Diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood 1803-1838*, Hobart, 1977, p. 46. On this trip Knopwood and Mertho 'went a-shooting' and observed signs of natives; Brown 'went up the mountains a-botanizing.' For other details see RW Giblin, *The Early History of Tasmania Vol II The Penal Settlement Era 1804-1818* Collins, Sorell and Arthur, Melbourne, 1939, p. 24; TG Vallance, DT Moore & EW Groves, *Nature's Investigator: The Diary of Robert Brown in Australia 1801-1805*, Canberra, 2001, pp. 489-91

¹²Nicholls, *The Diary of the Rev Robert Knopwood*, p. 48. For other details of this expedition see Vallance, Moore & Groves, *Nature's Investigator: The Diary of Robert Brown*, pp. 497-500 & Giblin, *The Early History of Tasmania Vol II*, p. 24

¹³Vallance, Moore & Groves, *Nature's Investigator*, p. 499

¹⁴Giblin, *The Early History of Tasmania Vol II*, p. 24

¹⁵Nicholls, *The Diary of the Rev Robert Knopwood*, pp. 97-8

Bushrangers and hunters, mainly convicts, moved from the fringes onto and westward across the Plateau. Former marine, Hugh Germain, was best known of the latter and may have reached the Plateau.¹⁶ Circumstantial evidences that hunters visited the Upper Derwent and its eastward tributaries, are the appellation, Fat Doe for the Clyde, and convict Thomas Tooms' discovery of the Great Lake in 1815.¹⁷ Michael Howe, described by a contemporary as *The Last and Worst of the Bushrangers*,¹⁸ operated from bases west of the Shannon River between 1816 and 1818. Although their precise movements and observations will never be known, sightings, even distant, of The Reserve remain possible rather than probable.¹⁹

John Beamont, holder of several government posts and friend of Governors Davey and Sorell, was probably the first gazer from afar of The Reserve's mountains.²⁰ That Beamont travelled extensively on the Plateau, as manager of Edward Lord's properties, searching for pastures and recovering 'escaped cattle' is confirmed by four previous journeys to Barren Plains to the east of Great or 'large' Lake.²¹ After 'officially discovering' the Great Lake in 1817, Beamont's party proceeded thirty seven miles westward. The route from the Ouse River is uncertain, although Beamont believed he had reached the Gordon River and only lack of provisions

¹⁶J Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, London, 1843, pp. 212-3 claims that Germain named places such as Jericho, Bagdad and Abyssinia from his only books *Arabian Nights* and *The Bible*

¹⁷For Tooms background see M Tipping, *Convicts Unbound*, Ringwood, Victoria, 1988, pp. 190-1 & 317 & E FitzSymonds, *Mortmain*, Hobart, 1977, pp. 49-52; for activities near the Great Lake see G Crawford, W Ellis & GH Stancombe, (eds) *The diaries of John Helder Wedge*, Hobart, 1962, p. xxxi

¹⁸T Wells, *Michael Howe, the Last and Worst of the Bushrangers*, Hobart, 1818

¹⁹For details of Howe, see HTG 11 January 1817, *Mercury* 10 July 1858, Dr Ross, 'Recollection of a Short Excursion to Lake Echo in March 1828', *Hobart Town Almanack and VDL Annual*, 1830, p. 93, J Bonwick, *The Bushrangers*, Melbourne, 1856, (facs edit) Hobart, 1967, pp. 47-57; KR Von Stieglitz, 'Michael Howe' in *ADB* Vol I, pp. 560-1

²⁰For Beamont's colourful career see I Mead, 'John Beamont', *ADB*, Vol 1, pp 76-7, & examination by Commissioner Bigge, *HRA* 3, III, pp. 343-44

²¹For Edward Lord see T Rienits, 'Edward Lord', *ADB* Vol. 2, pp. 127-8

prevented them reaching Macquarie Harbour.²² There is some scepticism about the endpoint. In 1921 Frederick Watson, editor of the *Historical Records of Australia* series, suggested rough country north of Lake St Clair and the Canning River or one of its tributaries.²³ More plausibly Tasmanian historian Chris Binks suggested that the party travelled via the Little Pine River and descended the Great Pine Tier to the Little and Nive Rivers. Binks thought that Beamont's 'remarkable Snowy Peak bearing s65w' was Mt Ossa and 'a very high Mountain covered with snow, we named it St Pauls: it bore due West about Thirty Miles' was Mt Olympus.²⁴ Beamont's claim that the Ouse or Big River, a 'considerable stream' issued from a series of Lakes, west of the Great Lake²⁵ was confirmed in 1836 when Frederick and Walter Synnott of *The Hermitage*, on the Shannon discovered its source in the 'midst of the most beautiful and picturesque scenery that can be imagined'.²⁶

Apart from a 'peaceful valley of singular and beautiful appearance', probably near the Nive, Beamont was unable to locate country attractive to settlers. In general the country deteriorated west of the Great Lake consisting of 'rocky plains and sand, with Few Gum Trees, and those stunted'.²⁷ Despite this, the party definitely sighted, and possibly visited, The Reserve. Perhaps the 'dismal appearance' of the country stultified Beamont's imagination and inhibited his prose. Beamont's

²²Copy of Mr Beamont's Journal taken on his tour to the Western mountains, Van Diemen's Land, Monday December 1817', *HRA* 3, III, pp. 586-589

²³*HRA* 3, III, p. 982

²⁴*HRA* 3, III, p. 588-89, C Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p 48; earlier Binks 'First Impressions: explorers in the Cradle Mt.-Lake St Clair region: 1817-1850', pp. 35-43 in *The conservation and use of Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair National Park: proceedings of a public seminar*, Launceston, 1981, claimed that the peaks were possibly Mt Gould and either a peak in the Du Canes or Mt Olympus, p. 35

²⁵Copy of Mr Beamont's Journal ...', *HRA* 3, III, p. 587

²⁶*HTC*, 20 May 1836; for personal details of Synnotts see L Andel, *Clerk of the House*, Melbourne, 1984, pp. 178-9

²⁷*HRA* 3, III, p. 344

despondency lifted when after a day of trudging through snow, his party camped near a 'beautiful Marsh'.²⁸ His use of Jones, who had previously circumnavigated the Great Lake, is another example of the intersection of official and unofficial worlds.²⁹ Thus the Plateau persisted as the domain of stock-keepers and their confreres, while The Reserve remained *terra incognita*.

With a steady increase in free settlers from 1817, demand for land grew. Perceiving a need for personal investigation, Sorell, accompanied by Surveyor General GW Evans, inspected and commented favorably on land between the Clyde and the Derwent Rivers in December 1820.³⁰ In a bid to encourage permanent occupation, temporary grazing licences on unlocated lands were withdrawn as grants were measured in the eastern or lower Central Plateau.³¹ Now topographical nomenclature acquired respectability: the Doe or Fat Doe became the Clyde, the Shannon was named, the Ouse replaced the Big River, and Dick Brown's gave way to the Dee.³²

Surveyor Thomas Scott's February 1822 trip along the Clyde River to Lakes Sorell and Crescent marked a new phase in official and private forays across the uncharted Plateau.³³ Similarly Dr Ross, Scott, Dr Hood and convicts James Carretts and

²⁸Copy of Mr Beamont's Journal ..., *HRA* 3, III, p. 588-89

²⁹Perhaps the guide was the Jones of 'Jones's or Shannon River' & Jones' Hut on St Patrick's Plains referred to in 1826 during the pursuit of Brady, see Montagu to Butler, 25 January 1826 CSO 1/243/5883

³⁰'Memorandum of a Tour, December 1820', pp 642-45, *HRA* 3, IV, pp. 643-4 contains an account of this trip.

³¹*HTG* 8 September 1821; for description of relevant districts such as Amherst and Murray see *HTG Supplement*, 28 July 1821

³²*HTG* 23 December 1820

³³'Thomas Scott's Diary of the Journey to the Lakes', Mitchell Library. He was accompanied by Horace and Charles Rowcroft, and Mr Bisdee; Lake Crescent was previously named Laycock's Lake after the colony's first north-south traverser Lieut Laycock in 1807, see *HRA*, 3, 1, p. 746

Regan visited and named Lake Echo and Plains of Bashan in 1823.³⁴ The following year *Rosegarland* pastoralist and businessman Richard Barker was impressed with the pastoral potential and 'very picturesque appearance' of country surrounding the Great Lake.³⁵ Depending on the route traversed, Barker may have glimpsed The Reserve.

As population grew and land hunger increased, Sorell realised the need to investigate elsewhere in the colony. Thus in 1823 he despatched Captain John Rolland, 3rd Buffs Regiment, by land and noted horse breeder, Captain Charles Browne Hardwicke, to explore the far North West. Hardwicke's account is of minor significance for this story, apart from the VDL Company's subsequent use of his reports.³⁶ Rolland made two exploratory trips: the first south of Port Sorell towards the Lower Mersey and more importantly in late November from Mole Creek beyond the Second Western or Mersey River to the Mt Roland area. Meston's claim that Rolland was 'turned back by a precipitous mountain mass, which derived from this the significant name 'Rolland's Repulse''³⁷ was not supported by the explorer's account. From the Western Tiers, the party saw 'very scrubby Mountainous country' in the distance, while the foreground was either flats on the Mersey or the Mersey-Forth high country. When faced by almost impassable thick scrub, they found an 'opening in the lower tier of the Mountains' and a native track up the tier. From the summit they saw 'A remarkable Mountain ... distant Thirty five or 40 Miles to the Southward and Westward' possibly a peak in

³⁴Ross, 'Recollections of a Short Excursion to Lake Echo ...', pp. 85-122; for Carretts, see Tipping, *Convicts Unbound*, p. 261

³⁵HTG 16 April 1824

³⁶Capt Hardwicke, 'Remarks upon the North Coast of Van Diemen's Land from Port Dalrymple to the North-West extremity,' *TPP*, [LC], No 16, 1861, p 2 & S Anderson, *Charles Browne Hardwicke: an early Tasmanian Pioneer*, Sydney, 1978, *passim*

³⁷Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 37

the central reserve. Rolland's general directions appear to rule out Binks' claim that this was Cradle Mt. Rolland's estimates were unfavourable with the south west being 'very hilly and thickly wooded ... [and] not a vestige of plains or a good Soil'. The low country was susceptible to floods, hills were thickly timbered or scrubby, grass was coarse and the estimated ten thousand acres of cleared country was on elevated plains. Although Rolland's loss of compass made charting an exact route impossible, it is almost certain that he obtained the first views of the northern Reserve from afar.³⁸

Contemporaneously explorer and pastoralist James Hobbs began his 'Tour of Discovery round Van Diemen's Land'. From Mt Sorell on the West Coast Hobbs believed that there was 'not more than twenty miles of a mountainous country in an easterly direction' to Plains which 'might be entered by passing over the South corner of the large lake, [probably the Great Lake] ...' Carretts, notorious because of mis-treatment of Aborigines, alleged he was on the Plains when Beamont was lost.³⁹

When Sorell departed in 1824 major features of the Plateau were known and distant sightings made of The Reserve's mountains. With the exception of Rolland's views from the north-east, the majority sightings were easterly and south-easterly. There is a remote possibility that some shepherds or bushrangers had visited The Reserve's eastern fringes.

³⁸All quotes here from Rolland to Sorell, 21 February 1824, CSO 1/95/2276 & Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', pp. 16-7; Binks pp. 40-1. For Rolland's life see HTG 24 December 1824 & Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 37

³⁹J Hobbs, *Tour of Discovery round Van Diemen's Land*, TPP [LC], No 75, 1881, p. 19 & HRA 3, IV, Sorell to Arthur, pp. 134-154 in Arthur to Bathurst 9 June 1824 p. 153; for biographical details see ER Pretymann, 'James Hobbs', ADB, Vol 1, pp. 542-3

From Close-up

Pastoralism and associated features continued to dominate this next phase of exploration. The removal and suppression of perceived threats such as bushrangers and convicts and pursuit of Aborigines accounted for several visits and sightings. The continuing search for new pastures by governments, the VDL Company and private settlers was the other impulse.

The formation of the Macquarie Harbour penal settlement added a new dimension to convict escapees. Sorell had sought a place of secondary punishment for recidivists where their labours, coal mining and cutting Huon Pine, would be productive.⁴⁰ The location possessed the

essential property off precluding escape by Sea or land ... the great Tier of Mountains which runs nearly North and South the whole length of the Island, their base verging on the Western Coast, offers a barrier which must render escape by land, always very difficult, and for years probably impracticable.⁴¹

Quaker missionary James Backhouse noted other privations, such as close surveillance, toiling in almost incessant rain, harsh punishment and restricted rations.⁴² All this heightened the Harbour's attractiveness to authorities.

Sorell's assertion that escape was 'probably impracticable' was proven false. Of the 116 convicts who escaped between 1822 and 1827,⁴³ seventy five absconders supposedly perished in the woods.⁴⁴ Most aimed either for isolated stock huts in

⁴⁰Sorell to Macquarie 25 June 1821 in Macquarie to Bathurst 18 July 1821, *HRA* 1, X, p. 528

⁴¹Sorell to Goulburn 12 May 1820, *HRA* 3, III, pp. 18-9

⁴²J Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, London, 1843, p. 49

⁴³For typical views of Macquarie Harbour see J Bonwick, *The Bushrangers*, Melbourne, 1856, (facs edit) Hobart, 1967, pp. 18-35

⁴⁴Surgeon Barnes' evidence to the Select Committee on Transportation is contained in D Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour*, Hobart 1977, Appendices A & B, pp. 138-50

the Upper Derwent Valley or sought coastal salvation, south towards Port Davey or north to the Pieman River and the VDL Company's settlement, Woolnorth.⁴⁵ In 1832 Surveyor William Sharland thought that successful escape, without compass, from Macquarie Harbour to the settled districts 'must ever be a matter of chance.' He believed it probable that they crossed south of Frenchman's Cap using the Peak of Teneriffe as a guide to the settled districts.⁴⁶ Around Lake Ewart in 1860, Government geologist Charles Gould found remains of an old hut and burning off which may have been the work of either escapees or Aborigines.⁴⁷ So it is possible that some sighted Lake St Clair; probably more gazed on the mountains of The Reserve. Feelings of gloom and melancholia, perhaps mingled with awe, were probably uppermost compared with the often uplifting feelings experienced by modern walkers.

Alexander Pearce, who escaped in September 1822 with seven others, was the most notorious gazer from afar. With time, it is Pearce the Cannibal rather than Pearce the Explorer who engages attention. Differing narrators of his escape, Knopwood and Cuthbertson, tantalize rather than illuminate. Pearce related passing 'over the summits of a teir (sic) of Mountains near to that one called the Frenchman's Cap' and subsequently 'over a very high Teir of Hills untill they arrived at a Most beautiful plain'.⁴⁸ In his reconstruction of this journey, historian Dan Sprod suggests approaches either north or south of Mt Arrowsmith. In any case Pearce

⁴⁵For an early example when pursuing soldiers perished see *HTG* 13 July 1822; On Hobbs' expedition, 'Tour of Discovery round Van Diemen's Land', near West Point the party captured a Macquarie Harbour escapee who was sent to Port Dalrymple.

⁴⁶*HTC* 27 November 1830 & their trial *Colonial Times* 10 August 1831; Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour*, p. 73, W. Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward ...', *TPP*, [LC] 1861, No 1, p. 7 & The Peak of Teneriffe, later known as Wylds Craig after Geographer Royal, James Wyld 1790-1836. Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, p. 12

⁴⁷C Gould, 'Exploration of the Western Country', *TPP*, [H of A], 1860, No 4, p. 7

⁴⁸Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour*, pp. 27 & 35

would have been the first European to sight the southern mountains, Rufus, Hugels and particularly Olympus, from the south-south-west.⁴⁹

Following his arrest in January 1823, Pearce's story was not believed and he was re-transported to Macquarie Harbour. Two months of freedom with shepherds, and then re-transportation prompted dissemination of his exploits. Officials, aware of an escape route keeping Frenchmans Cap 'to the right',⁵⁰ hushed this escape for fear of offering convicts a glimmer of hope.

The March 1828 escape of Huntingdonshire farm labourer James Goodwin and Dubliner Thomas Connelly was more important than, and possibly inspired by Pearce's success. They eventually reached the Vale of Rasselas by either the Franklin or Denison Rivers. Goodwin's bush skills and topographical knowledge acquired when assisting Thomas Scott on the Plateau were invaluable.⁵¹ Perhaps from Wylds Crag or further westwards the escapees may have sighted Olympus, with views of St Clair less likely. Following Goodwin's recapture, (the fate of the Irishman is unknown) authorities were interested in his knowledge of potentially fertile grazing country and his ability to pass through the wilderness. Later,

⁴⁹Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour*, pp. 66-80 & for general details, Bonwick, *The Bushrangers*, pp. 62-7 & a contemporary, Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 59-61; for a more recent account see P Collins, *Hell's Gates: the terrible journey of Alexander Pearce Van Diemen's Land Cannibal*, Melbourne, 2002, pp. 148-9, 154-5 and Binks' suggestion, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 262-3

⁵⁰ For Macquarie Harbour Commandant James Butler's comments re escape route see CSO 1/102/2454 & for biographical details, Neil Batt, 'James Butler', *ADB* Vol 1, p. 191

⁵¹ Thus the moniker 'Scott's Jem'; he was assigned to Scott when the latter had a farm at The Springs; ironically Goodwin assisted in the search for members of Brady's Gang before being sentenced to Macquarie Harbour, E Fitzsymonds, *Brady, McCabe, Dunne, Bryan, Crawford, Murphy, Bird ... and their associates, Bushrangers in Van Diemen's Land, 1824-1827*, Adelaide, 1979, p. 129

Goodwin, described as an 'excellent hand in the bush', was appointed a guide on Darke's expeditions around Wyld's Crag.⁵²

Pastoralist and author David Burn averred that the Plateau east to the Great Lake 'has always been a select and favorite resort of bush-rangers'.⁵³ It is interesting to speculate whether bushrangers such as James McCabe and Matthew Brady who robbed government surveyor John Helder Wedge in early February 1825, ventured further westwards from their hut at St Patrick's Plains.⁵⁴ Prominent settler George Farquharson's memorial for clemency after being convicted of sheep stealing, revealed that bushrangers and associates, mainly convict shepherds, roamed widely across the Plateau.⁵⁵ Thus it is possible that some may have been viewers from afar.

Prior to his execution in January 1827 Patrick Dunn(e) informed Hobart Town Gaoler, Edward Bisdee of 'plants' or locations of stolen livestock near the Gordon River and Frenchman's Cap, the 'Western tier, beyond three large lakes; the ground above the place is very barren,' and 30 miles beyond Lord's stockyard on the Big

⁵²Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, p. 14 & for an account of this escape see Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 29-37 & CSO 1/276/6658 p. 32 & 1/403/910; for grazing potential see CSO 1/276/6658 pp. 23 & 32; for Goodwin's fate see HTG 18 December 1834. Subsequent escapees to reach the settled districts included Edward Broughton and Matthew McAvoy in November 1830. Patrick Fagan was killed by Aborigines and earlier Richard 'Up-and-down Dick' Hutchinson and Thomas Coventry were left behind — possibly a case of cannibalism See HTC 6, 10 & 13 August 1831

⁵³Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 67

⁵⁴L. Robson, 'Matthew Brady, ADB Vol 1, pp. 147-8; Bonwick, *The Bushrangers*, pp. 67-8; Pindar Juvenal, *The Van Diemen's Land Warriors*, Hobart 1827 & KR Von Stieglitz, *Matthew Brady, Van Diemen's Land Bushranger*, Hobart, 1964; Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 63-80; the *Colonial Advocate* 1 July 1828 contains a description of this hut sometimes referred to as 'their farm in the mountains', see Fitzsymonds, *Brady, ... and their associates, Bushrangers in Van Diemen's Land, 1824-1827*, Adelaide, 1979, p. 49

⁵⁵FitzSymonds, *Mortmain*, pp. 120-7; Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 67-8; for a Brady hideout between St Patrick's Plains and Great Lake see J Jorgenson, *History of the Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Van Diemen's Land Company*, London, 1829 (facsimile) Hobart, 1979, p. 26

River, heading towards Macquarie Harbour.⁵⁶ Historian Shirley Franks argues from Scott's Sketch Map of 1828 that Dunne's Gordon was the Derwent and the Cap was Wylds Craig and believed it too difficult to move stock to Frenchmans Cap.⁵⁷ The other locations suggest that Dunne would probably have sighted The Reserve.

Another impetus to Central Plateau exploration was the escalating conflict between European settlers and Aborigines. The proclamation of martial law, November 1828, led to the evolution of roving parties responsible to Oatlands Police Magistrate, Thomas Anstey. These parties used military outposts, established by an earlier proclamation of April 1828, at St Patrick's Plains, Regent's Plain or The Den near Bothwell and Western Plain under the Western Tier.⁵⁸ Supposedly the parties roamed far and wide, although veracity is hard to assess for many gilded their exploits in the hope of official favour. The tempestuous Gilbert Robertson, newspaper editor and roving party leader, purportedly traversed the Plateau and 'reached within about 15 miles of the hill called the French man's Cap and returned by the Shannon.' If correct then Robertson's party sighted the Southern Reserve. Franks suggests that Frenchmans Cap may have been mistaken for either Mt Olympus or Wylds Crag. In either case Robertson's party either visited or saw The Reserve.

⁵⁶For details of Dunne see his memorial to Lieut.-Governor Arthur 2 January 1827 in *FitzSymonds, Mortmain*, pp. 170-4; Bonwick, *The Bushrangers*, pp. 87-9; Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 81-3; & for their 'plants' *HTG* 13 January 1827

⁵⁷Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', p. 145 & Gowlan, *Darke of the Peaks*, p. 25 for Darke sighting stock-huts in the Vale of Rasselas area in 1833

⁵⁸Arthur to Huskisson 17 April 1828, *HRA* 3, VII, p.182 & *HTG* 13 December 1828; for their aims, to protect settlers and their property and to facilitate the capture of Aborigines without shedding too much blood, see NJB Plomley, *Jorgen Jorgenson and the Aborigines of Van Diemen's Land*, Hobart, 1991, p. 21

Other examples place viewings in the possible category. Jorgenson's men were most likely to roam the furthest westward. For a fortnight in October 1827 his party scoured country around the Western Lakes. Interesting for both hyperbole and perception of human inspiration was the Dane's letter to botanist WJ Hooker:

Often, when ascending the loftiest summits far above the Clouds, I beheld with a species of gloomy delight, the ranges and tiers beneath my feet, appearing like the waves of the mighty ocean troubled and agitated when the gale sweeps furiously over its surface. The terrific desolation around me as far as the eye could reach in the Horizon stuck in the mind with incomparable awe and astonishment, but alas! I had no one by me who could participate in my feelings, my companions were all ignorant men, insensible to the sublime and the beautiful.⁵⁹

Other viewers included Sergeant Brian and Corporal Rian, possibly Andrew Ryan, who visited the Lake Fergus area and Corporal O'Brien who reached the Shannon, Clyde and Liffey Rivers in March-April 1826.⁶⁰ In 1829 from near Lake Fergus, John Danver's party claimed to have 'perfect views of Frenchmans Cap, the Travellers Guide, the Barn Bluff, Mount Dundas and the Great Western Tiers'. Danvers could not have seen Barn Bluff; his other claims are possible but beyond verification.⁶¹ At times these parties used black guides, such as Mungo and Brune Island Jack or Boomer, because of their bushcraft and tracking skills, and possibly because of local knowledge. There were numerous sightings but no captures or conciliation.⁶² Other parties that year claimed to have seen Frenchman's Cap, but

⁵⁹Jorgenson to Hooker, 12 September 1834 in D. Sprod, *The usurper: Jorgen Jorgenson and his turbulent life in Iceland and Van Diemen's Land 1780-1841*, Hobart, 2001, pp. 618-9

⁶⁰Sprod, *The usurper*, p. 54; for Andrew Ryan as Rian see NJB Plomley, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals of George Augustus Robinson*, Hobart, 1966, p. 578; Corporal O'Brien was involved in the pursuit of the Brady Gang in 1825-6 including pursuit on the Plateau. Also JM Bruce (ed), *Loitering in a tent: Jorgen Jorgenson*, Burnie, 1995, pp. 6 & 64

⁶¹CSO 1/320/360 February 1830; They also claimed to have discovered a 'hitherto unknown' river, they named Anstey, which arose in the Nineteen Lagoons, and flowed south and west unlike other streams which generally flowed southeastly. The 'Anstey' was almost certainly the Little Pine. Danver obtained a ticket-of-leave for pursuit of the Brady Gang in late 1825 in the Green Ponds district

⁶²HTC 31 January 1829

Franks plausibly suggests that it may have been Mt Cuvier or any other lofty peak.⁶³

By the Black Line in October 1830, maps were more detailed and accurate. Scott's *Military Chart of Van Diemen's Land* shows the Shannon issuing from the Great Lake, locates the Big River rising north of Lake Fergus, while the Derwent is traced beyond Mt Field and Wyld's Crag. The Western Tiers were described as being covered with snow 'the Greater Part of the Year'.⁶⁴ In preparing for the line Scott planned for two roving parties to ascend the 'Western Range of Mountains from Dry's Bluff to the Extreme Western Bluff'. If this occurred, only poor visibility would have prevented views of the northern Reserve. Line B extended from Lake Sorell to Lake Echo while the more relevant Line A was to ascend the Plateau from the north and move west of Great Lake.⁶⁵ Again, Reserve views were possible.

On his Friendly Mission, GA Robinson traversed the country surrounding the VDL Company's Great Western Road and sighted thick late-winter snow on Cradle and Barn Bluff in 1830.⁶⁶ On his third journey, October-December 1831, which resulted in the surrender of remaining members of the Big River tribe, sightings may have occurred near the Great Lake.⁶⁷ Topographical confusion persisted with 'The Conciliator' claiming that beyond the Platform Bluff, southwest of Great Lake, he saw 'some high mountains covered with snow. These I recognised to be the Barn

⁶³Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', p. 146 & roving parties CSO 1/118/7578 & 1/120/7578

⁶⁴T Scott, 'Military Chart of Van Diemen's Land' Mitchell Library, MC 880/1826/1

⁶⁵T Scott, Frame O12 in CYC 722, Mitchell Library

⁶⁶Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, 13 August 1830 p. 198 & further sightings 19 & 20 August 1830, p. 201

⁶⁷Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 483-586 with route maps pp. 537 & 555

Bluff mountains near Middlesex Plains'. This is impossible, and Robinson almost certainly saw the Walls of Jerusalem.⁶⁸

More important was Robinson's mid-1834 camp near Pencil Pine Creek. Here he learnt of a native track past Dove Lake to Larmairre country, the Lakes, which he felt was not difficult as Jenny, a friendly native, had travelled the route.⁶⁹ South from his camp, initial 'good travelling' over grassy country then deteriorated into morass. Plomley believed that Robinson had climbed out of Dove Valley onto Cradle Plateau to obtain panoramic views which included 'Cradle Rib Rock' and Barn Bluff.⁷⁰ Throughout this period Robinson's party had frequent views of the northern Reserve from Gads Hill.

Following the re-appearance of Aborigines in the settled districts, attacking stockhuts and their occupants in the Hamilton-Ouse area in August 1834,⁷¹ Robinson instructed his sons George and Charles 'to conduct the missionary party across the Western Mountains to the neighbourhood of the Ouse'⁷² and intercept natives who were the 'only Aborigines now at Large'. Robinson asserted that only 'the extreme severity of the season' accounted for their evading capture.⁷³ In two accounts, George Robinson junior outlined his 'journey by the native track' between 8 and 21 September 1834 — in his prolix father's words, the 'iate perilous and truly

⁶⁸Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, 5 December 1831, p. 541

⁶⁹Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, 25 June 1834, pp. 889-90; Alexander McKay told Edward Curr of presumably the same track from Barn Bluff via the Lakes to Ouse, Curr to Aboriginal Committee, 19 November 1831, CSO 1/319/7578

⁷⁰Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp 917-8

⁷¹HTC 15 August 1834; HB Torlesse to Chief Police Magistrate, 11 August 1834, CSO 1/318/pp. 331-4 & Asst Surveyor JL Seymour's report, 21 August 1834, CSO 1/318 pp. 329-30 & CSO 1/317, pp. 622-28 & HTG 23 April 1834, *Colonial Times* 2 September 1834

⁷²GA Robinson to Col Sec Montagu, 25 August 1834, CSO 1/318 pp. 320-22

⁷³GA Robinson to Col Sec Montagu, 25 August 1834, CSO 1/318 p. 323

arduous Journey from the Surry Hills by the Cradle Mountain (across an unknown and unexplored part of this territory) by the New Country to the Settled districts on the river "Derwent".⁷⁴ Soon after commencing Robinson's group forded two branches of the Forth 'of some magnitude just above their confluence' and then encountered an 'incredible depth of snow over which the natives felt most reluctant to pass'. Hopes sank as Jemmy, who had used the route in his childhood, several times became lost. Thick snow and 'exceedingly mountainous and woody' terrain slowed progress. Poor conditions persisted as they forded a tributary of and then the Forth itself on the fourth day. In some places the country was 'almost impassable from its steep mountains covered with snow' and the tiring natives entreated Robinson to return because the succeeding country would have 'huge bodies of snow'. Robinson's vagueness then worsens, inhibiting guesses as to his route,⁷⁵ although the 'exceedingly mountainous and woody' terrain before the Forth may have been Pelion West.

For seven days the party experienced snow, frequently waist deep. Morale plummeted and Robinson admitted all probably would have been 'overwhelmed by the same, [ie continuous thick snow] had it not been partially frozen'. Yet this same frozen ice so cut the Aborigines' legs and feet that the track was marked with blood. Thus progress was painful and slow. Rivers were forded 'at great risk to our lives' none more so than the Mersey where trees on both banks were cut to permit a crossing. After the 'people having suffered greatly from hunger and fatigue' they finally arrived at Lake Echo.⁷⁶ They proceeded to the River Ouse, interviewed

⁷⁴G Robinson Junr, River Ouse 29 Sept 1834, CSO 1/318 pp. 339-347 & GA Robinson to Col Sec Montagu, 6 October 1834, CSO 1/317 pp. 360-1

⁷⁵G Robinson Junr to GA Robinson, CSO 1/318/ pp. 365-79. Despite this perhaps the party had followed a line similar to the Overland Track

⁷⁶G Robinson Junr to GA Robinson, CSO 1/318 pp. 365-79

settlers involved in the skirmishes which resulted in the death of at least one Aborigine. Of the natives there were no signs with Robinson believing they had 'retrograded to Middlesex Plains'.⁷⁷ There are no details about the return route. On 28 December the remaining eight: a male, (one probably dying from chest disease on the return from the Ouse), four women and three young boys, surrendered near Western Bluff.

GA Robinson commented that as a consequence of the expedition, the Government had information about an area

hitherto unknown from personal knowledge & observation ... and a more Severe Journey (for the short distance and time it occupied) could not have been undergone at any period since the first Settlement of this Colony.⁷⁸

Both the pursued and pursuers were the first known groups to walk significant portions of The Reserve.

GA Robinson incorrectly claimed that the 'entire aboriginal population are now removed.' In late 1835 there were reports of Aborigines on the VDL Company land including Hampshire Hills and around the Forth River.⁷⁹ Robinson's sons, George and Charles, and friendly natives, began a desultory search.⁸⁰ In late November they met a family, comprising husband, wife and four children, near Cradle Mountain but were unable to persuade them to join fellow Aborigines on Flinders Island. The following year there were reported sightings in the Hamilton district,

⁷⁷GA Robinson to G Robinson Junr, River Ouse 29 September 1834 CSO 1/318 p. 345

⁷⁸GA Robinson to Col Sec Montagu, 6 October 1834, CSO 1/318 pp. 360-3

⁷⁹For VDL Company reports see 23 December 1835, CSO 1/317, pp. 653-55 & Lonsdale to Chief Police Magistrate, 15 & 28 December 1835 CSO 1/317, pp. 650-1 & 657-60

⁸⁰The friendly natives included Wooredy and wife, Tunnerminerwait and wife, Robert and wife, Isaac, Richard and Edward

with this group again possibly using the native track to the Lakes.⁸¹ The search was renewed again in 1837 but without success. Nevertheless, there were opportunities for frequent views of the Northern Reserve. Four years later there were attacks on VDL Company property at Woolnorth and Surrey Hills, and in 1842 a party of seven, including a young boy named William Lanne, later called 'King Billy', was captured near the Arthur River.⁸² Details of these activities remained unknown to the public partly because of contemporary jealousy and antipathy to the Robinson family.⁸³ Calder publicised some information in the 1860s and 1870s, while Plomley provided some details about the Cradle to Ouse journey.

Search for pastures

In the search for pastures, settlers had a unusual ally, wild cattle, which descended from Edward Lord's mobs in about 1817. As they moved west-north-westwards along the Derwent Valley they mixed with escapees from other settlers' herds.⁸⁴ Limited only by Nature, the cattle multiplied and subsequently were credited by Dr Ross of *The Hermitage* and David Burns of *Ellangowan*, as being respectively the discoverers of Bashan Plains and the 'New Country', that tract of country centring on Marlborough.⁸⁵ From there they moved across the Plateau reaching the Great Lake area by 1831.⁸⁶ By 1842, however, the position had changed, with Calder

⁸¹H Torlesse, Police Magistrate Hamilton to Chief Police Magistrate, 24 March 1836, CSO 1/322 p. 60

⁸²Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 926-7

⁸³JE Calder, *Some account of the wars, extirpation, habits etc. of the native tribes of Tasmania*, Hobart, 1972, p. 73

⁸⁴For details of licences for Grazing Occupation see *HRA* 3, III, pp. 575-77 & for nature of system see *HRA* 3, III, pp. 250 & 320-22

⁸⁵Ross, 'Recollection of a Short Excursion ...', p. 99

⁸⁶Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 556 near St Patrick's Plains & p. 543 at northern end of Great Lake; Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, p. 30 for Darke's men Cunningham and Goodwin observing

noting that the 'awe-inspiring creatures' were all hunted out except for a 'very few that are said to haunt the fastnesses of the remote Mount Hugel'.⁸⁷ Thus cattle preceded Europeans as occupants of The Reserve. Stockmen, especially those employed by Edward Lord, may well have had distant views of the Southern Reserve.

Burn described the wild cattle as 'the first discoverers', but also hinted that they were followed by 'some of those amateur admirers of cheap beef'.⁸⁸ Government and settlers saw a need to control the wild beasts because they posed a threat to social and penal discipline. Various solutions, such as the 1830 Impounding Act, were proposed but parties were embroiled in vexatious and bitter disputes.⁸⁹

In the north, a similar state prevailed. Better known are William Field's cattle which strayed from the Whitefoord Hills and Dairy Plains westward to the Mersey-Forth high country from the late 1820s. In 1829 on the Vale of Belvoir north-west of Cradle Mt, Lieut.-Governor Arthur's party noted stragglers from the VDL Company's herd at Surrey Hills. While rounding up strays, the Company's employees would have had Cradle Mt and Barn Bluff as a backdrop.⁹⁰

over a hundred cattle with 'no brands, perfectly wild [and] they showed more disposition to fight than run away' near the present day Catagunya dam in 1833

⁸⁷J Calder, *Recollections of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin in Tasmania*, Adelaide, 1984, p. 37

⁸⁸Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 161

⁸⁹MCI Levy, *Governor George Arthur: a colonial benevolent despot*, Melbourne, 1953, pp. 272-5; *Colonial Times* 21 April 1835, Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 107-9 & Ross, 'Recollection of a Short Excursion ...', pp. 104-6

⁹⁰Dr J Ross, *Hobart Town Almanack and VDL Annual, 1830*, pp. 103-6 for Lord's stockmen, p. 63 for Arthur's party. Dan Griffin, alias The Tramp, claims that Abraham Abrahams' cattle roamed between the Meander and Mersey in the early 1820s. *Early Deloraine: the Writings of Louisa Meredith and Daniel Griffin*, Launceston, [1985?], p. 24

The VDL Company, and its manager Edward Curr, the Potentate of the North, stimulated exploration in the north-west quarter of the colony. At a time of growing demand for wool, increased difficulties and costs associated with obtaining supplies from traditional suppliers Spain and Germany, induced English woollen interests to seek alternatives. John Macarthur and then Commissioner Bigge's Report, which linked New South Wales' future prosperity to large scale pastoral production, drew attention to the Antipodes. Cheap convict labour and land grants were other inducements. Almost contemporaneously, these attractions and a series of guide books brought Van Diemen's Land into contention. The formation of the Australian Agricultural Company based in New South Wales in 1824⁹¹ was the immediate catalyst for the formation of the VDL Company. Key issues such as area and location of the land grant, and associated conditions were discussed before and after the granting of a Royal Charter in 1825. However, the mistaken belief that all the colony was topographically and climatically similar to existing settled districts resulted in protracted negotiations between the Company, Colonial Office and colonial authorities. This narrative concentrates on those journeys of exploration relevant to The Reserve rather than on general Company history.⁹²

Soon after the arrival of senior Company officials in March 1826 the search for suitable pasture land commenced. In late April 1826 Curr, and surveyors Henry Hellyer and Joseph Fossey ascended Mt Roland. Views of the northern Reserve were unlikely, given the stormy conditions. In September Hellyer and Clement

⁹¹D Bairstow, *A million pounds, a million acres: the pioneer settlement of the Australian Agricultural Company*, Cremorne, NSW, 2003 & J Gregson, *The Australian Agricultural Company, 1824-1875*, Sydney, 1907

⁹²For formation of the Company see Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, pp. 9-16 & HJW Stokes, 'The Settlement and Development of the Van Diemen's Land Company's Grants in North-western Van Diemen's Land, 1824-60, BA Hons (Hist), University of Tasmania, 1964, pp. 4-29

Lorymer returned to Roland and from Van Dyke observed vast open and undulating plains which were probably the Vale of Belvoir. To the northwest, under Flinders' 'Peak like a volcano', now Valentine's Peak, were extensive plains, but lack of provisions precluded closer investigation.⁹³

On 2 September 1826 Jorgen Jorgenson and experienced bushmen Malcolm (Mark) Logan and Andrew Colbert, a black man,⁹⁴ were instructed 'to proceed along the Shannon, and through the Lakes, to ... effect a passage to the westward, [Pieman's River] and open a communication overland with Cape Grim.'⁹⁵ Curr modified initial instructions that 'the line laid down must be attended to as much as possible' by allowing that 'Insurmountable difficulties may cause the party to deviate materially from it'.⁹⁶

Hallmarks of an epic journey such as a near encounter, with bushranger Dunne, crossings of flood-swollen rivers, trudging through heavy snow and fog, were captured in Jorgenson's inimitable style. There were views of the peaks in the central and southern reserve but reliance on Scott's inaccurate 1824 map and a personal tendency to exaggeration resulted in erroneous claims. Jorgenson's assertions of reaching Valentine's Peak, and the lake from which issued the Derwent, and of nearing Frenchman's Cap and the Pieman River, have caused some

⁹³Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 38, Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 41-2

⁹⁴When an assigned servant to Mr John Scott, Colbert was involved in the capture of Hodgetts, a member of the Brady Gang, in December 1825, Fitzsymonds, *Brady ... and their associates, Bushrangers in Van Diemen's Land, 1824-1827*, Adelaide, 1979, p. 95

⁹⁵Jorgenson, *History of the Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 18 & for this expedition pp. 18-32

⁹⁶Sprod, *The Usurper*, p. 545

later writers to claim that he was the discoverer of Lake St Clair.⁹⁷ After extensive fieldwork and close scrutiny of Jorgenson's accounts, Meston believed that the Dane never left the Plateau — that his 'Peak like a Volcano' was the West Wall of the Walls of Jerusalem, his lake was 'Barbara' now Ball, and the river was the Mersey. The Du Canes 'of great height, far loftier than any I have yet seen in this country' Jorgenson called Dundas Range after his patron, with the 'most conspicuous' Mt Dundas 'of so remarkable an appearance, that it can scarcely be mistaken'. His Parson's Hood was Ossa and road to the west, 'a practical opening into the extreme West country' was probably one of the apparent gaps on the mountainous skyline.⁹⁸ Binks, while broadly agreeing with Meston, claims Frenchmans to be Mt Gould, Mt Ossa to be Dundas and Pelion West to be Parson's Hood.⁹⁹

Nearly five years later Jorgenson's geography had not improved, as he claimed 'the Derwent River runs through a large lagoon towards the Platform Bluff and not far from the Barn Bluff Snowy mountain'.¹⁰⁰ Initially Curr accepted Jorgenson's claim that his western progress was stopped by the Derwent River near the 'Peak like a Volcano'.¹⁰¹ Although the Company later believed this account 'to be in part a fabrication',¹⁰² Jorgenson's invocation of 'very extensive plains, stretching in all

⁹⁷SH Roberts, *History of Australian Land Settlement*, London, 1969, pp. 64-5 & later F Clune and PR Stephensen, *The Viking of Van Diemen's Land: the stormy life of Jorgen Jorgenson*, Sydney, 1954, claimed he reached Surrey Hills months before Hellyer

⁹⁸A Meston, 'Jorgenson's Journey across the Central Plateau - September-October 1826' W Meston & RAV McCulloch (eds), *PPRST*, Vol. 89, 1955, p. 116 & for his earlier views, Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, pp. 38-9, & for Jorgenson's lake, see Jorgenson, *History of the Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 29, mountains pp. 24-5, road to West, pp. 25 & 28 & the Hill, p. 28

⁹⁹Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 52

¹⁰⁰Jorgenson, 30 December 1831 in Sprod, *The Usurper*, p. 569

¹⁰¹R. Hare, *The Voyage of the Caroline*, (ed.) I Lee, London, 1927, p. 140 Curr to Adey 3 November 1826

¹⁰²Curr, 5 January 1829 in Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 39

directions farther than the eye can reach' was the basis of its claim to a 10,000 acre holding block near Lake Fergus. Despite failing to find an overland stock route, the expedition proved that trans-Plateau crossings were possible even in extreme conditions and gave rise to the belief that such a link would boost livestock trade between the Company and the rest of the island.¹⁰³

In February 1827, after discovering the previously sighted Surrey and Hampshire Hills, Hellyer's party had clear views of Cradle or Ribbed Rock, presumably so named for the great ribs and rock buttresses which recalled mediaeval cathedrals, Barn Bluff, Rolland and Van Dyke. Hellyer's response to the topography testified to the influence of Romanticism and nostalgia for home: the Hills 'resemble English enclosures in many respects, being bounded by brooks between each, with belts of beautiful shrubs in every vale'. To the north were the 'even more park-like' Hampshire Hills which were 'handsomely clumped with trees'.¹⁰⁴ With insufficient pastures around Cape Grim, these findings induced Curr to apply for 150,000 and 10,000 acres at Surrey and Hampshire Hills respectively. After a personal inspection in October 1827, Curr realised that the Hills being cold and wet in winter were unsuitable for sheep, an opinion supported by stock losses during the winters of 1831 to 1833.

¹⁰³HTG 24 March 1827

¹⁰⁴H Hellyer's Report, 13 March 1827 in J Bischoff, *Sketch of the History of Van Diemen's Land ... and an Account of the Van Diemen's Land Company*, London, 1832, (facs edit) Adelaide, 1967, pp. 164-178; Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 59-69 & Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', pp. 54-62; Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, pp. 39-40. Hellyer, Richard Frederick & Isaac Cutt ascended the 'Peak like a Volcano' on 14 February, hence the name Valentine's Peak. Bischoff, *Sketch of the History of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 179; for Fossey's description of Surrey Hills as having 'very much the appearance of a nobleman's domain, both as to extent and good quality ...' in *TPP* [LC] 1861, No 16, Part IV, p. 9

Before this visit Curr realised that stock routes were essential if the Hills country was to be used. Thus he sought eastern and western approaches. On Fossey's eastern attempt in April 1827, he found that steep ridges and gorges under Mt Fossey, (nowadays Mt Kate) posed 'very great' difficulties to road construction. He observed the cradle-like gap between Little Horn and the summit, hence the name, and Dove Lake. To the practical Curr, the observation that the 'apparently unbounded' Hounslow Heath would be 'a great acquisition to the Surrey Hills as a summer sheep run' was of greater interest.¹⁰⁵ Notwithstanding Jorgenson's criticism that as Fossey's and Hellyer's journey's were 'easily performed ... as the road had been travelled over by others before them',¹⁰⁶ Fossey was the first to view the mountain from close-up.

In November 1827 Fossey investigated Curr's hunch that a trans-Plateau route, similar to that attempted by Jorgenson, would be shorter than the more circuitous lowland route at the foot of the Tiers. His first two attempts which involved the Mersey Valley provided views into Cradle country. On the third and most arduous journey, he forded the Forth, ascended north of Hansen's River before descending into Rodway Valley. This involved a different but close view of Cradle, and most probably resulted in the first ascent in February 1828. Convinced that Curr's preferred route across the Upper Forth and Mersey was impracticable, Fossey found suitable crossings over the watersheds. Views of the Cradle and Barn Bluff may have provided inspiration to the men toiling on the VDL Company or Great Western Road which continued onto Middlesex Plains.¹⁰⁷ Hellyer obtained

¹⁰⁵Report of J Fossey in J Bischoff, *Sketch of the History of Van Diemen's Land ...*, pp. 178-181, Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 78-9

¹⁰⁶Jorgenson, *History of the Origin, Rise, and Progress of the Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 53, Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', pp. 62-4

¹⁰⁷For Fossey see Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 78-9 & 81

similar views, albeit from slightly different angle, during his fortnight stint in January 1828 traversing the country from Hampshire Hills to Mersey Plains during which he discovered the Middlesex and Borradaile Plains.¹⁰⁸

In November 1828 Hellyer, Fossey, Isaac Cutts, a Company stalwart, and newcomers Walker and noted bushman Alexander McKay, probed the country south of Surrey Hills. This journey ranks in the annals of Australian exploration. The party headed south along the Mackintosh Valley mistakenly identifying Mt Heemskirk for Murchison. After labelling Mt Farrell the Eldon Range, south of modern day Tullah, the party turned north eastwards because of dangers associated with recrossing the flooded Mackintosh and finding a path through the labyrinth of ravines, gorges and vallies to the south. Near Granite Tor the demoralised party enjoyed a brief but uplifting interlude. Hellyer's description of a sunset which highlighted the spires, knobs and domes, and snow filled gullies of Mt Murchison¹⁰⁹ indicated a man who still appreciated the beauties of nature. In his enthusiasm Hellyer mistakenly thought this mountain glory a portent of fine weather. The next day, however, brought continuous snow squalls and during a 'white-out' on the summit the men wandered aimlessly seeing 'nothing but great precipices and gullies every way.'¹¹⁰ As clouds dispersed, they headed south-east to avoid the gully or Fury Gorge which was 'such a perishing part of the country'. Comfort surrendered to discomfort and declining morale as they dropped off the ridge to Mt Inglis in another snow storm. Surrounded by thick snow, three feet in the hollows, and unable to light a fire, the group had a night 'as miserable a one as

¹⁰⁸Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 83; Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 40 states that Fossey discovered Middlesex Plains the previous year.

¹⁰⁹Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 96

¹¹⁰Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 96

ever we experienced.¹¹¹ During a lull, Hellyer realized that they would have to travel to the east of Barn Bluff to avoid the 'Ravine [which] seemed to be there more perpendicular than even where we were'.¹¹² Faced with dying from hypothermia or dropping into the Fury Gorge, they chose the latter. This proved to be wisdom:

the storm now came in with more violence than ever and completely doubled us up, as we were standing half buried in the snow; it cut our faces and hands to pieces, and when we attempted to retreat, we found the snow had filled up all the marks of our approach. ... Our faces were swollen and smarted excessively, our hands and feet benumbed.¹¹³

Hellyer's description of the four hour descent of the 'horrid ravine' is one of the finest descriptions in colonial exploration:

We began to descend its almost perpendicular sides, finding great support from the ice bound snow as we went down amongst jagged and beetling rocks, from which were hanging icicles, like inverted obelisks as large in diameter as the trunks of trees, a proof that the frost is exceedingly severe in these elevated regions.¹¹⁴

After fording the Mackintosh, (actually the Fury), the party crossed and the next day slowly climbed onto Little Plateau. Partly melted snow and mist made direction finding difficult and the group dropped into Sutton's Creek. Doubts about survival became palpable as they faced climbs and descents from Sutton's Gully to Schist Creek and onto the southern end of Hounslow Heath. As the mist lifted, so morale revived and in the shelter of Cradle Valley

We felt we were in the land of the living once more ... we seemed to have arrived in another climate, warm and sheltered compared with where we had been the last four days. In fact it was an escape from a snow prison.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 98

¹¹²Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 98

¹¹³Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 98

¹¹⁴Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 98

¹¹⁵Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 99

After recognising Dove Lake from Fossey's description, they followed the outlet before entering Middlesex Plains, headed westward to the Vale of Belvoir and finally reached their starting point, Burghly, 'all stiff and sore faces, legs and hands still swollen'. Hellyer's regret in not obtaining views from the high ground near Cradle, seemed trivial in face of the ordeal they had survived.¹¹⁶ Their epic did not assist the Company, despite adding details of rivers and mountains to existing charts and being the first to explore the northwestern fringes of The Reserve. Later, in February or March 1831, Hellyer probably ascended Cradle while preparing a new map of the Surrey Hills in March 1831.¹¹⁷ Few outside the Company's employment here and in England and the colonial survey department would have known of these expeditions until reports were republished in Parliamentary Papers and resurrected by 20th century historians. (For map of explorations see Figure 9)

A ruling from the Colonial Office by Secretary of State for the Colonies Huskisson permitted the Company to select four or five blocks rather than the original tract of 250,000 acres. Thus Arthur selected Wedge, trained in the English Fens and experienced in colonial conditions, to survey the north-west quarter. That Wedge was a 'rapid though not always [an] accurate surveyor' was both a virtue and a vice.¹¹⁸ During their surveys in 1828 Wedge and his nephew John Darke took bearings on mountains including Cradle and queried whether one was Barn Bluff or Round Bluff. Thus Wedge was another gazer from afar but from a different

¹¹⁶Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 99

¹¹⁷Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, p. 81. Meston, *The Van Diemen's Land Company*, p. 42; Curt to Inglis 28 March 1831 in Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', p. 98

¹¹⁸Jones, *Backsight*, p. 64 for Frankland's assessment of Wedge & also CSO 1/19160 p. 108 Frankland to Burnett 27 May 1830

quarter. His more favourable outlook on the far north west, based on the premise that dense rainforests were underlain by fertile soils, displeased Curt.¹¹⁹

In January 1829 Arthur and retinue — Clerk of Councils John Montagu, surveyors Frankland and Scott, the governor's son Frederick and a Mr Reeves,¹²⁰ proceeded to the north-west for a personal inspection. Along the VDL Company Road, they found the ascent to Gads Hill, on the Mersey-Forth divide, surpassed 'all other hills that reasonable creatures are supposed to clamber over. ... A cameleopard made to walk up backwards, would be just the thing.'¹²¹

After reaching the high country west of the Forth, the party crossed the 'extremely park-like ... and] prettily wooded' Middlesex Plains.¹²² From the Vale of Belvoir they espied 'those two remarkable mountains [Cradle and Barn Bluff]... towering above their neighbours'. Noteworthy were the interchangeable use of The Cradle and Ribrock and estimation of heights at approximately 5,000 feet. Landscape appreciation still reflected an English rather than colonial experience. Hence the park-like country south to Cradle comprised 'clear sloping hills, studded with dark green myrtle-woods and clumps, with here and there a little silvery stream curling round the rising hills.'¹²³ Descriptions of the journey in the *Hobart Town Courier*

¹¹⁹Crawford et al, *The diaries of John Helder Wedge*, p. 44 for observations from the Dip Range on the first of four journeys & M Uhl, 'The Wedge Family: Pioneers in Van Diemen's Land and Port Phillip', *PPTHRA* 12(4) April 1965, p. 84

¹²⁰AGL Shaw, *Sir George Arthur, Bart 1784-1854*, Melbourne, 1980, pp. 20, 211-12, 274, 278-9 & 283; for another account see Thomas Scott, 'Extract from a Journal kept by Mr T Scott in the Suite of His Excellency Lieutt Governor Arthur - during an excursion to the North West Quarter of Van Diemen's Land' CSO 1/44/837. Also published as 'Arthur visits the North West: A Document', *PPTHRA* Vol 9(1) February 1961, pp. 16-23 which is a prosaic account with fewer details of the high country: 'A very romantically situated Lake was perceived at the northern end of the Vale, [of Belvoir] and high peaked Mountains in the South [ie Cradle and Barn Bluff]'

¹²¹HTC 7 February 1829

¹²²Ross, *Hobart Town Almanack* ... , p. 62

¹²³HTC 7 February 1829

and the *Hobart Town Almanack* presented a vivid, if somewhat romantic, view of this area to Van Demonians. The expedition made Arthur aware of the difficulties confronting the Company, and he endeavoured to provide 'every reasonable relief to overcome the difficulties which were not foreseen.'¹²⁴ Thus ended exploration in the vicinity of Cradle Mountain, although travellers to the Company's holdings obtained mountain views as they traversed the Great Western Road.

Scott's map of this year, 1824, confirmed the then limits of official geographical knowledge. As indicated, there existed among bushrangers and their associates a considerable body of local knowledge normally unavailable to authorities. It is not surprising that there was considerable exploration by locals impelled by a sense of curiosity and desire to find resources, valued by contemporary society. Given the land hunger, as evoked by Burn, it was to be expected that individuals with initiative such as Beamont would be prominent in exploration. Government continued to play a prominent role through discovery and making land available land by surveying and selling or granting.

In late February 1825 Wedge ascended the Central Plateau before heading south-west of the Great Lake crossing the Pine, Little Pine and Nive Rivers. He may have sighted mountains of the central and southern Reserve because in 'one of those scenes that the mind delights in contemplating' his panorama extended westward to 'Rocks which rear themselves perpendicularly to a considerable height, and are capped with snow'. Lamenting that as his 'province was to act & not to contemplate - ... [he] reluctantly turned from it'.¹²⁵ This expression of latent emotion, the

¹²⁴Arthur to Twiss 9 November 1829 *HRA* 3, VIII, p. 701

¹²⁵Crawford et al, *The diaries of John Helder Wedge*, p. 14

donation of natural history specimens and artefacts to the Saffron Walden museum and a closer scrutiny of his diaries indicate a more sensitive man than usually revealed in historical accounts.¹²⁶ Later that year when Wedge journeyed to the Mersey and Chudleigh Lakes there were again possible Reserve sightings, albeit more northerly.¹²⁷

The arrival of Surveyor General George Frankland¹²⁸ in 1827 ushered in a new era of exploration. He was office-bound more frequently than was desirable for a romantic explorer at heart, a consequence of the backlog of previous surveys and demands of new settlers. In 1828 he and Scott tried to verify Macquarie Harbour escapee Goodwin's assertion of grazing land in the western country and to solve the riddle of the rivers, that is the sources of the Derwent, Gordon and Huon. Poor weather prevented them from reaching the Peak of Teneriffe, 'from which most of these rivers seem to take their rise'¹²⁹ and obtaining panoramic views, including The Reserve. Yet another attempt to trace the sinuosities of the Derwent to its source 'was vainly essayed.'¹³⁰

Most expeditions were, in David Burns words, 'rarely one of absolute pleasure — a substratum of profit, immediate or prospective, will generally be found an inherent

¹²⁶Uhl, 'The Wedge Family' p. 84

¹²⁷LSD 1/81/670 sub enclosure 12 pp. 22-23

¹²⁸PR Eldershaw, 'George Frankland', *ADB* Vol 1, pp. 410-11 & G Mackaness (ed) *Some Private Notes and Correspondence of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin (Tasmania 1837-1845)*, Dubbo, New South Wales, 1977, pp. 54-5

¹²⁹This view was expressed in the report of Woodward's expedition to the Huon in *HTC* 24 January 1829

¹³⁰Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 99-100, Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, p. 526. One of Robinson's party was with Frankland and noted the Falls he reached 20 November 1831. Goodwin's map used on the expedition showed Stanfield's track to the Derwent west of the Peak of Teneriffe along the Vale of Rasselas and Upper Gordon. Goodwin's Map and 298 'Original Sketch made on Tour of Discovery on the Upper Part of the River Derwent'. Stanfield was probably Wm Stanfield who arrived 1808 who held land in Broad Marsh area or a son Thomas with land on the Derwent.

part of the composition'. The 'substratum of profit' was assessment of land for suitability to 'fatten culls by a summer run at the lakes',¹³¹ with distant views of The Reserve of no consequence. In April 1831 Philip Russell, manager of Captain Patrick Wood's *Dennistoun* estate, and party, possibly including his recently arrived half-brother George Russell,¹³² travelled forty or fifty miles south and westward of Great Lake to 'a very large lake, along the coast of which they travelled for two days.' This lake was bordered by thin and barren country with few signs of conventional fertility such as kangaroos. Perhaps it was Lake St Clair because a 'river of considerable size was seen to emanate from it, flowing in the direction of Macquarie Harbour'.¹³³ Franks doubted this because of the apparent contradiction between 'thin and barren' nature of the land and the beauty of St Clair.¹³⁴ The account's silence on either rainforests around the Lake or the Traveller Range strengthen Franks' case. Yet Russell was no bush novice, having visited the Ouse before September 1826. His employer Captain Wood passed on the news so that Curr could correct Jorgenson's mistaken belief that the Ouse was the Derwent.¹³⁵

In late February-March 1832 Assistant Surveyor William Sharland¹³⁶ departed Bothwell and headed via the New Country towards Frenchmans Cap. On ascending Mt Charles on 8 March he saw Gordon Lake, actually St Clair, three miles distant which was 'surrounded ... with almost inaccessible mountains, upon which the snow still remained.'¹³⁷ But Sharland did not reach the Lake believing that 'nothing

¹³¹Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 136-7

¹³²For personal details see PL Brown, 'Philip Russell & George Russell', *ADB Vol 2*, pp. 408-9

¹³³*HTC* 23 April 1831

¹³⁴Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', p. 144

¹³⁵NS 13, VDL 23; (LHC) Reel 16 p 52 Curr to Jorgenson 2 October 1826

¹³⁶'William Stanley Sharland', *ADB Vol 2*, p. 436 & *Tasmanian Mail* 27 November 1878 for biographical details; PL Brown claims (unsupported) that Sharland discovered St Clair in 1827, *Clyde Company Papers Vol 1 1821-35*, London, 1941, p. 83

¹³⁷Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward', p. 4

could be gained' from such a visit.¹³⁸ In part this stemmed from an erroneous belief that he was in the Gordon River valley, having earlier mistaken the Derwent for the Nive. Crossing the Navarre Plains, his northerly view was that of

a vast range of mountains ... ascending to a very considerable height, whose craggy summits appeared to vie with each other in their fantastic structure: - one, exactly resembling two steeples; a second, ascending to almost acute cone, with a high dead tree resembling a flag-staff on its summit, called the latter Mount Piggott, and others of a similar nature.¹³⁹

Sharland left unnamed the mountains now known as Olympus, Rufus, Gell and Hugel, but provided bearings.¹⁴⁰

Several benefits ensued from the expedition. The *Hobart Town Courier* described Sharland's well-watered grazing country suitable for cattle as 'presenting very eligible sites for farms or townships' but feared the discoveries would be rendered 'comparatively useless' by the new land sales policy, the Ripon Regulations.¹⁴¹ Sharland acknowledged the value of local knowledge by using William Roadknight and Stanfield as guides.¹⁴² Importantly for this narrative, Sharland provided the first close-up descriptions of the southern Reserve mountains.

In March 1833 Frankland despatched John Darke to search for the pastures supposedly sighted by Goodwin around the Peak of Teneriffe. From Marlborough,

¹³⁸Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward', p.4

¹³⁹Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward', pp. 4-5

¹⁴⁰Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward', pp. 4-5 provides bearings: from a mile and half past Derwent a bluff N55W, Bluff N35W under which Gordon lake lies; 4.5 miles Bluff N72W, Bluff N33W. At 5.5 miles, N35W he observed a 'very remarkable rock ... with another on its summit resembling a lion,-called it the Lions Point.'

¹⁴¹HTC 31 March & 7 April 1832; for a detailed analysis of land policy see P Burroughs, *Britain and Australia 1831-1855 a study in imperial relations and Crown Lands administration*, Oxford, 1967, pp. 35-75 & 91-100

¹⁴²Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a Journal of Expedition to the Westward', p. 2

Darke, Cunningham, and Goodwin headed roughly southwest to the Nive, still mistaken for the Derwent. From the Peak they saw a

lake which I did not know of before, very distant about North West. ... [and] to the westward a large expanse of marsh country with a considerable river running through it southwards.¹⁴³

This together with views from King William's Plains gave Darke impressions of St Clair and the southern Reserve. On a return trip two months later bad weather denied them this outlook. Nevertheless, they located potential grazing land, and provided Frankland information pertinent to preparations for his 1835 campaign to solve the riddle of the rivers.¹⁴⁴

With the island's finest grazing lands already selected and unlocated, the Ripon Regulations insisted that land was to be sold at a minimum of 5/- per acre, there was strong competition for scarce land in the settled districts. The 'discovery' of apparently inexhaustible pastures around Port Phillip came at an inopportune moment for the colony. 'Optimism was boundless' as papers reported 'hundreds of acres of the finest soil in the world may be obtained for nothing'.¹⁴⁵ Under these conditions it was predictable that the ambitious and scions of pastoral families migrated to Australia Felix. Yet arrival of large numbers of labourers into Tasmania and the wish to establish 'a respectable yeomenry', exacerbated existing local land-hunger. Thus there was increased pressure to discover new agricultural lands.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, p. 22, & 'Copy of a Journal 19 March-8 April 1833' in LSD 1/91/2606 sub no 1 & Frankland's report CSO 1/589/13389 Frankland to Darke 19 April 1833

¹⁴⁴For the first expedition see Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, pp. 14-28; Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 124-31, LSD 1/91/441 2656/1 & 2656/2; for the second see Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 127-31 & LSD 1/72 Darke to Frankland 27 June 1833, Gowlland, *Darke of the Peaks*, pp. 29-34

¹⁴⁵AGL Shaw, *A History of The Port Phillip District: Victoria Before Separation*, Melbourne, 2003, p 57

¹⁴⁶Frankland to Montagu, 12 December 1834 CSO 1/770/16466

This congruence of needs — insular land shortage and mainland land abundance, migrants, riverine riddles and an opportunity to assess the western country's suitability for settlement — permitted a thwarted explorer to depart his Hobart office. Arthur and Colonial Secretary Burnett¹⁴⁷ dashed Frankland's initial hopes of making a reconnaissance between Surrey Hills, the lower Huon and Dee. Nevertheless, a large party of surveyors,¹⁴⁸ convicts, soldiers, free men and two natives, whose role remains undetermined, departed Marlborough in February with Sharland's Gordon Lake their destination. From atop some high peak, Frankland hoped 'to acquire by a single Coup D'Oeil sufficient knowledge of the features of that country ...'¹⁴⁹ to resolve topographical conundrums. Near the Clarence River plains they saw a mountain, Olympus, which

appeared of immense height, and perpendicular on all sides. ... Its isolated and commanding position at once excited us in the desire of ascending its Summit, but the apparently inaccessible nature of its faces left us but slender hope of being able to accomplish this object.¹⁵⁰

After walking the Frankland Beaches, Frankland realised that the mountain was not Barn Bluff. Accounts by Wedge and Alexander McKay, convict bush-man, offer interesting contrasts. Wedge thought St Clair 'a beautiful lake, in the heart of scenery of the most picturesque character', while McKay confirmed that a large river which issued from the lake was 'to all appearances the Derwent.'¹⁵¹ Frankland has been designated 'official discoverer' of Lake St Clair, despite Sharland and Darke's

¹⁴⁷For biographical details see PR Eldershaw, 'John Burnett', *ADB* Vol. 1, pp. 182-3

¹⁴⁸Surveyors included Frankland, Wedge, Calder, Seymour and Dawson

¹⁴⁹G Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Head of the Derwent, and to the Counties Bordering the Huon, Performed in February and March 1835*, Launceston 1937, p. 4

¹⁵⁰Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 5

¹⁵¹There are brief details of the commencement of the journey in 'Diary and Memoranda of JH Wedge, February 1835 pp 254-5, A 1429 Mitchell Library

observations. Frankland was conscious of the limitations of conventional exploration reports:

I will not dilate on the the extreme beauty of the scenery as it might be considered out of place in an official Report, but I must confess that while narrating the circumstances of this journey, I feel inspired by the first discovery of such Romantic Country, impressions which revive even in cold narrative.¹⁵²

From Cynthia Bay the task of climbing Olympus appeared difficult because

On every side it appeared scarped by perpendicular Columns of basalt so as to be quite unsurmountable, but when the setting Sun lit up in bold relief every pillar of its singular natural structure, we conceived hope of being able to find some fissure through which an ascent might be practicable¹⁵³

Despite this unfavourable assessment, they proceeded to Watersmeet, the confluence of the Hugel and Cuvier Rivers, the former named after Baron Charles Hügel, whom Frankland had met the previous year and the latter after the 19th century naturalist.¹⁵⁴ From the 'beautiful' Cuvier Valley with its 'ornamental clumps of small gum trees'¹⁵⁵ the party were soon atop Olympus with the leader sketching, mapping and naming the surrounds. Mountain glory was palpable as the leader enthused that

The view was beyond all description, the whole of Lake St Clair lay at our feet with its beautiful bays and golden beaches, and in addition we could descry at least twenty other lakes of various dimensions in different parts of the panorama; two in particular [Petrarch and Laura] attracted our special notice and admiration by their beauty. ... The whole of the country to the North was intersected by lofty Caps, the North-East Country was high and tabular, abounding in Lakes, the West, too, exhibited many chains of Mountains and the Ocean beyond¹⁵⁶

¹⁵²Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, pp. 6-7

¹⁵³Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 7

¹⁵⁴Hugel, *New Holland Journal*, p. 119

¹⁵⁵Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 8

¹⁵⁶Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, pp. 8-9

Frankland's literary interests, contemporary and classical, influenced nomenclature Ida, Manfred and Byron, and the Narcissus River. A contemporary newspaper, while commenting that the countryside was 'mountainous and and alpine', lamented that Frankland chose the classical Olympus, the home of ancient Greek gods, rather than seeking an aboriginal name.¹⁵⁷

The following day Franklin's party continued to Lake Petrarch, where they admired 'a remarkably handsome species of Fir, which we named the pine of Olympus'.¹⁵⁸ In pragmatic Van Diemen's Land, this euphonious name was replaced by Pencil-top Pine. The expedition proceeded across the Navare and King William Plains, 'which would be nearly useless in their present undrained state',¹⁵⁹ obtaining similar views to Sharland. After a tiresome march, they camped by the Traveller's Rest River, subsequently renamed the Navarre.¹⁶⁰ King William Range, Mt Hobhouse, Guelph River and Princess Victoria, later to become Rufus, were named. With the discovery of the Derwent, attention shifted from The Reserve to the sources of other rivers. The ascent of the Peak of Teneriffe¹⁶¹ by Frankland, Calder and Wedge provided panoramas of the Southern Reserve. Then new country was traversed: Wedge and Calder followed the Gordon down the Rasselas, and the Huon from Lake Pedder, while Seymour, in less picturesque surrounds, traced the Nive's tributaries to the Nineteen Lagoons west of the Great Lake.

¹⁵⁷HTC 27 February 1835

¹⁵⁸Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 9

¹⁵⁹Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 10

¹⁶⁰JE Calder, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and the Frenchman's Cap', *HTC* 21 September 1850

¹⁶¹Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition ...*, p. 13

Frankland's party located grazing country east of St Clair and were optimistic about extensive buttongrass plains near Mt King William and the Arthur Plains. The *Colonial Times* was less favorably inclined labelling the 'grand tour' a 'wild goose (or emu) chase'.¹⁶² The 'scenery in many parts was magnificent, and in some parts even sublime' but land was useless being too high, exposed and covered with poor wiry grass. The Arcadian myth of button grass plains had not yet entered Antipodean dreams. The *Hobart Town Courier* lambasted the upset price, 5/- per acre, determined by Downing Street, when 'actually [the lands] are not worth the same extent of ocean'.¹⁶³ Cartographically the expedition was a major success and solved the riddle of the rivers. (See Figure 10) Frankland's hopes of similar expeditions foundered on the exigencies of day-to-day administrative minutia, especially boundary surveys, and the changing economic and political climate of the Franklin regime. The cloud of administrative inefficiency which hung over Frankland continued until his death in 1838 aged 38. Hoped for public acclamation for his 1835 expedition, proved as elusive as many Romantics' dream of linking Arthurian legend with his birthplace, the Wells-Glastonbury area. If short term fame was denied, historical recognition was accorded by publication of the 1835 expedition and his 1837 Map.

The Quaker missionaries, James Backhouse and George Washington Walker were unusual for their motives. Backhouse's childhood love of alpine flora of the Teesdale district bloomed with employment in an uncle's nursery. This, together with an appreciation of the invigorating influence of mountains, was an ideal background for his journey to Van Diemen's Land.¹⁶⁴ In the summer of 1832-33

¹⁶²*Colonial Times* 3 February 1835

¹⁶³*HTC* 27 March 1835

¹⁶⁴S Backhouse, *Memoirs of James Backhouse Walker*, York, 1877, pp. 4-7

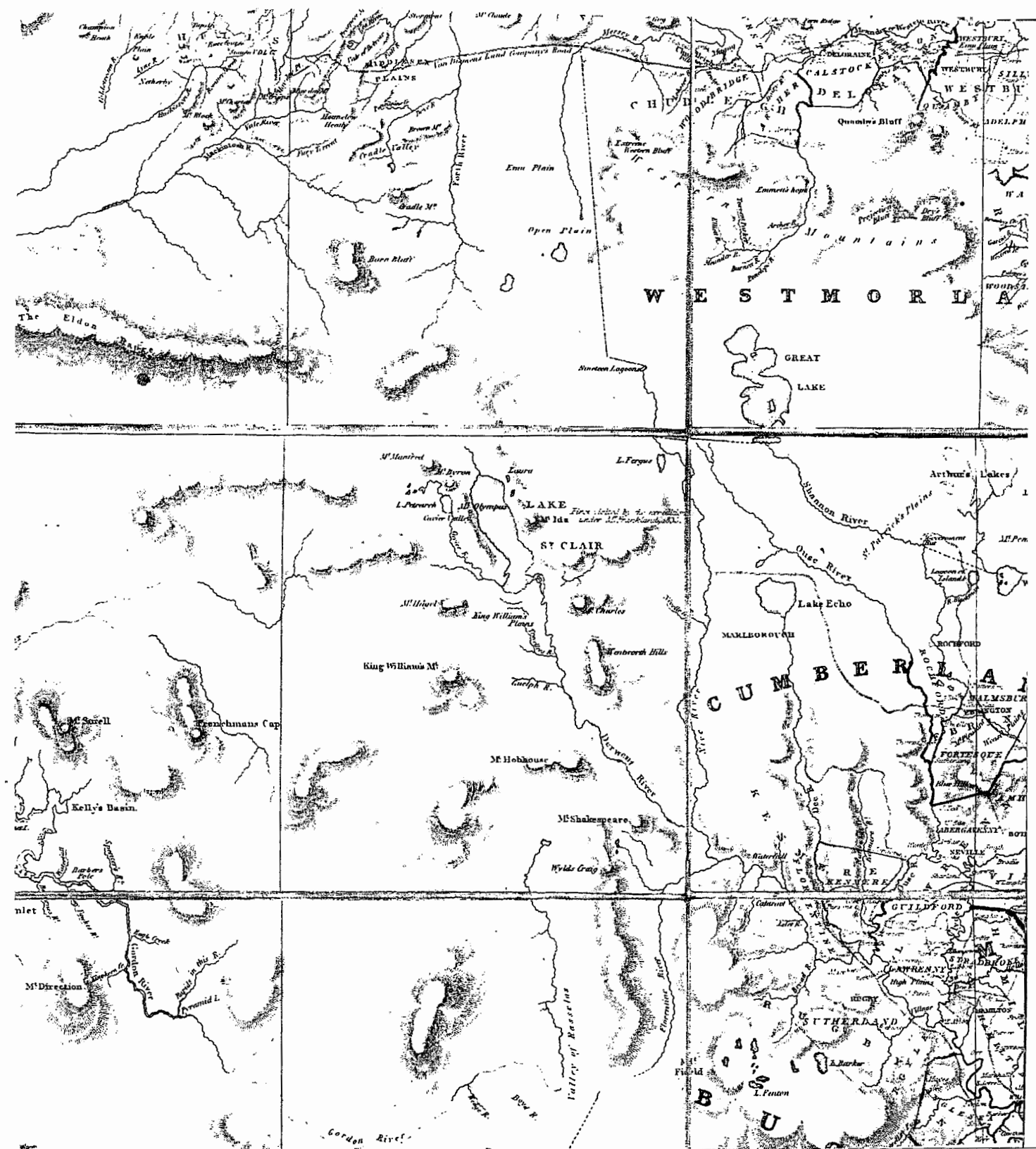


Figure 10: Surveyor General Frankland's Map, 1839

the pair surveyed Cradle and Barn Bluff from different angles, Gads Hill, Middlesex Plains and Valentine's Peak. From the last mentioned, the 'commanding view' — twenty to thirty miles of forests' — revealed no evidence of 'the cheerful haunts of man'. Walker's comments that 'the mind is ready to recoil at the dreary prospect' reflected mountain gloom rather than mountain glory.¹⁶⁵ They were not the first botanists to admire from afar as Ronald Campbell Gunn, politician and public servant, in traversing the Western Tiers from near Moleside to Meander Falls, obtained views of Reserve mountains and the Frenchman.¹⁶⁶

Conclusion

As a culmination of the aforementioned exploration and discovery and attempts to regulate and systematize the sale of Crown Lands, the island was divided into counties, hundreds and parishes in 1836. Pertinent to this narrative were the counties which fringed but did not include The Reserve. Thus the VDL Company Road from Deloraine to the Surrey Hills was the boundary between Devon and Westmoreland. The latter included the Plateau north of a line from Woods Lake, St Patrick's Plains, Great Lake, and Nive and then westerly from the source of the Nive to the extreme Western Bluff and the Mersey ford. In the south Buckingham's northerly limit was the Nive-Derwent confluence while Cumberland shared its northerly limit with Westmoreland and extended westwards to the Nive. With

¹⁶⁵J Backhouse & C Tylor, *The life and labours of George Washington Walker of Hobart Town, Tasmania*, London, 1862, p 126, J Backhouse, *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, London, 1843 (facs edit) London, 1967, pp. 126-7 & for his love of botanizing see p. 122 'Part of the day was occupied in Natural History observations.'

¹⁶⁶RC Gunn, Account of 1833, pp. 20 & 25 A316 Mitchell Library

likelihood of settlement remote, further division into hundreds and parishes was unnecessary.¹⁶⁷

The expedition of 1835 indeed marks a watershed. The Reserve had been seen from all angles apart from the central west. Both ends, Lake St Clair and Cradle Mtn, had been explored, mapped and named. Beamont, Russell and perhaps some bushrangers may have trodden the country, while George Robinson's party had traversed some areas. Knowledge of these journeys, however, was limited to small groups: government officials, cartographers and fugitives from the law. The VDL Company was the catalyst for exploration of the northern fringes of The Reserve, whereas in the south, topographical curiosity and proximity to summer depasturing runs on the Plateau induced further exploration.

To most, The Reserve remained *terra incognita*. Hopes of settlement or utilisation were not promising: at best the north was suitable for summer grazing of VDL Company stock, whereas there were hopes of replacing wild cattle in the New Country westward to the Clarence River. Grazing aside, there were no other reasons for utilising The Reserve.

Apart from the Romantic effusions of Frankland and Burn, usually information was recorded prosaically. No native-born provided an 'official' description: all came from those whose formative years were spent in quite different landscapes, although imbued with elements of Romanticism applicable to the colony. Some colonials walked for pleasure in the mountains, especially Mt Wellington and, occasionally

¹⁶⁷Proclaimed 6 January 1836, description in *HTG* 15 January 1836; for Westmoreland & Cumberland see pp. 59-60. This proclamation was revoked and re-issued on 20 June 1836, see *HTG* 1 July 1836

Mt Dromedary. From the latter they were rewarded with a view which 'probably exceeds anything of the kind in the island both for for the extent and richness of scenery'.¹⁶⁸ Such activities and recordings were a minority concern, because of absence of leisure, inclination and prevailing geographical knowledge which was described in 1829 as being 'so unaccountably backward'.¹⁶⁹ David Burn's rhapsodic account of a vist to Great Lake circa 1830-1

Who can tread the wilds of unfettered nature, and contemplate her in all her desolate grandeur, without feeling impressed how insignificant an atom he is amid her glorious works — and how utterly dependent upon his kind?¹⁷⁰

contains elements of late 20th century opinion. As well, it revealed the contemporary pre-occupation with improving Nature:

The floral mead — the pearly stream — the goodly grove, however they delight the eye, or ravish the imagination — what are they all? — a worthless waste, until the genius and industry of man converts and fits them for the welfare and enjoyment of his kind.¹⁷¹

Cruder, although atypical utilitarianism came from an officer of the Buffs who was 'no devotee to the picturesque; contenting himself with the indisputable fact, that water was water, and wood, wood'.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸HTC 31 January 1829

¹⁶⁹HTC 7 February 1829 on discussing the VDL Company Road used in the vice regal journey of 1829

¹⁷⁰Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 127

¹⁷¹Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 127

¹⁷²Burn, *A Picture of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 138

CHAPTER THREE

MYTHS OF PASTURES AND GOLD

1837-1871

'... the host of simpletons who (incapable of learning anything from the bitter lessons of the past) are even now throwing all overboard to enable them to reach those newly found diggings where nine-tenths of them are destined to find delusion and ruin on the field where they are taught to believe that they will meet with nothing but the favours of fortune.'

James Calder, 9 April 1860¹

Surely 10 millions of acres cannot all be barren, and unsuited for settlement. It is indeed known that, beyond the great central water-shed, there are vast plains cut off from settlement by about three dense but narrow thickets ... These plains, though inferior and producing only a coarse herbage, would possibly support sheep at the rate of one to ten acres. These pastures must not be closed for ever from observation, nor wholly neglected because they are of inferior quality.'

James Calder 28 July 1861²

Occupying over one-seventh of Tasmania's total area,³ buttongrass moorland is one of the most distinctive vegetation communities within The Reserve and western and south-western Tasmania. Buttongrass has an intrinsic beauty from its golden-brown colour and frequently forms the foreground to mountains as in the case of Mt Olympus from the Cuvier Valley. Yet often walkers miss these inspiring views because heads are averted to avoid falls and twisted ankles. Historian JB Walker's description of walking across buttongrass country anticipated the thoughts of future bushwalkers:

The worst of button grass is that the tussocks are so placed that [it] is equally difficult to walk between them as on them, and as the boggy ground is generally undermined by 'crabholes' made by a little land-lobster, you find yourself now twisting your ankle by an insecure tread on the top of a

¹J Calder, *Mercury* 13 April 1860, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and Lake Pedder'

²'Lands of Tasmania: Statistical Returns Compiled by the Surveyor General', *TPP* [H of A] 1862, No. 46, Preface, pp. iv-v

³S Jarman, G Kantvilas & M Brown, *Buttongrass Moorland in Tasmania*, Research Report (Tasmanian Forest Research Council) No 2, Hobart, c1988, p. 10. The area is over a million hectares

springy tussock, now plunging over the top of your boot-tops into a mud-hole, each of a sufficiently exasperating alternative⁴

Few people today, with the exception of some historians, are aware that livestock grazed these plains from the 1840s. Then, the most prominent buttongrass advocate, surveyor Calder described the plant as growing

in large tufts, and bears its seeds on a long thin stalk, in a small round head much resembling an onion, only larger than a musket ball. This is mixed with rushes and low shrubs, common in fenny situations.⁵

Earlier impressions were mixed. Surveyor Sharland avowed that the boggy Derwent Marshes on peaty soil could become 'productive if drained and artificial grasses substituted: the great moisture ... producing an abundant pasturage.'⁶ Frankland's party were optimistic about the buttongrass plains but the *Colonial Times* thought the plains were covered with poor wiry grass.⁷ Then, when Calder began trackwork from Marlborough to Frenchman's Cap in late 1830s, he too had mixed feelings.

That these vast plains must be productive became a contemporary shibboleth. Interest in buttongrass plains was fostered by the absence of freehold land in the settled districts and increased competition for crown land leases on the periphery. Interest derived from topographical ignorance of the west; in part it wrongly inferred that these vast plains must be as fertile as the already settled open country to the east. In colonial thought, open park-like country equalled fertility. Thus the VDL Company avoided the dense rainforests of the north-west despite the richness of the

⁴JB Walker, *Walk to the West*, (ed) DM Stoddart, Hobart, 1993, p. 19

⁵J Calder, 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, January 1849, pp. 415-29 at p. 417 & similarly Calder to Col Sec, 28 December 1840 CSO 8/30/488 p. 156; buttongrass or kerseymere was classified as *Gymnoschoenus adustus*

⁶W Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a journal of expedition to the Westward, (from Bothwell to Frenchman's Cap)', *TPP [LC]* 1861, No 16, p. 4

⁷*Colonial Times* 3 February 1835

Figure 11: Button Grass plains, Cuvier Valley





Figure 12: James Wyld's Map, 1849

underlying volcanic soils.⁸ Optimistic hopes dominated government and private thinking about limits of settlement and sustained dreams of an independent yeomanry. Calder's avowal that a person could travel from St Clair to the Arthur Ranges along vast plains further heightened expectations.⁹ On these swampy tracts, separated by timbered rocky hills or ridges, the coarse herbage was dominated by wiry rushes intermixed with button grass plants. Numerous fine streams, abundant open land, the possibility of cheap probation gang labour, and possibility of drainage encouraged visions of success.¹⁰ Calder himself had earlier doubts: poor quality soil, altitude, winters and inaccessibility and 'above all, the absence of grass seems to afford so hopeless a prospect to the enterprising agriculturalist or grazier that the natural inference is, that this place will long remain uncolonised.'¹¹ These suspicions were dispelled when wealthy pastoralist WJT Clarke (whose operations are discussed more fully in Chapter 6) depastured stock west of St Clair and by Calder's further visits to the westward. On a visit to the Vale of Rasselas in 1860 Calder publicly lauded the pastoral potential of button grass plains on which Dr JF Sharland, elder brother of surveyor William, depastured sheep. Noting the dramatic increase in grass since his previous visit in 1837, Calder declared that stocking 'coarse marsh pastures ... produces a very remarkable and beneficial change in the vegetation they produce, the feed grasses rapidly increasing and even in some measure supplanting the coarse and useless herbage.'¹² According to Sharland's shepherd, the transformation was attributed to sheep 'which will not touch its leaf

⁸Surveyor JH Wedge recommended the clearing of forests but the Company demurred because of associated costs, Wedge to Frankland in Arthur to Huskisson, 2 July 1828, *HRA* 3, VII, pp. 383-393 passim

⁹Calder to Col Sec, 16 March 1841, CSO 5/217/5527 pp. 77-8

¹⁰Calder to Col Sec, 16 March 1841, CSO 5/217/5527 pp. 78-81

¹¹Calder to Col Sec, 25 January 1841 CSO 8/30/489. Words were underlined in original & S Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', MA (History), University of Tasmania, 1959, p. 205

¹²JE Calder, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and Lake Pedder', *Mercury* 13 April 1860; Government Geologist Gould made similar comments about the Cuvier Vall  y, *Examiner* 21 August 1860

[and] greedily devour its seed.¹³ Whether Calder was mis-reading the potential of the landscape remained a moot point. Even in the late 1880s contrasting views persisted: JB Walker claimed that 'it is not a grass at all and nothing but a badger would attempt to eat it' while Surveyor General Sprent thought it fit for grazing and dairying.

This narrative now traces the development of the myth of button grass plains and its influence on land regulations promulgated by successive governments. As well it describes the occupation and use of land in and adjacent to The Reserve. Throughout the period, individuals infected with gold fever continued to search for fortune, fame and inner satisfaction. Calder asserted that the major characteristic of gold fever was a restlessness of spirit and, as the above chapter quote indicates, that riches were rarely found.¹⁴ Yet searches continued, and meanwhile increased accessibility favoured not only pastoralists but also those for whom wealth was not the paramount concern. Scientists, artists and pedestrians gained aesthetic pleasure and physical contentment from an increased understanding and appreciation of the landscape. Together they publicised The Reserve, locally and internationally, through the written word and the visual image. The chapter also examines attitudes towards landscapes, particularly montane and wild. Although supplanted by dreams of gold as the motive force for exploration in the late 1850s, the search for pastures continued throughout the period..

Buttongrass Plains

Frankland's departmental legacy of administrative inefficiency was bequeathed to his successors, Edward Boyd and Robert Power. Ironically, Boyd, who had claimed

¹³Calder, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and Lake Pedder'

¹⁴Calder, *Mercury* 13 April 1860. Similarly Gunn observed that 'there are no end to the rumours and reports of wonderful discoveries of metals along the Coast. I find, however, that on examination they usually turn out to be very unimportant.' 'Mr Gunn's Report: Exploration of the Northern Country', *TPP* [H of A], 1860, No 11, p. 3

to be unfit for field work, became Acting Surveyor General, for which position field work was a necessity, while Power had no practical knowledge of surveying. They headed a department, much reduced in size through economic necessity, despite Sir John Franklin's predilection for exploration.¹⁵ Personal animosity, with Calder prominent, further reduced efficiency. The Arctic explorer announced in his initial address to the Legislative Council that exploration 'of those Districts in the interior which are as yet almost unknown' would soon commence. While knowledge was inherently valuable, 'demand for land, and the limited extent and high value of that already discovered, are additional incentives — and powerful ones too — to such an enquiry.'¹⁶ Equally potent was the decision of the imperial government's Molesworth Committee, 1837-38, which recommended the ending of the assignment of convicts to individuals. Strictly controlled gangs of men or 'probationers', according to an October 1840 announcement, were to operate beyond the settled districts on public works. Equally unsettling was the dramatic increase of convict arrivals consequent upon cessation of transportation to New South Wales.

The colony's declining finances were reflected in notices about surveying and settlement of titles in November 1838. In an attempt to diminish the backlog of those seeking title deeds, surveying became grant specific rather than covering general tracts. To reduce government expenditure, costs were shifted to applicants, whether purchasers or lessees, and contract surveyors, rather than departmental officers, performed the tasks.¹⁷ Prior to the demand for buttongrass country, two 2,000 acre lots were advertised 'subject however to all risks arising from inaccuracy

¹⁵For personal details see A. Jones, *Hindsight: A history of surveying in colonial Tasmania*, Hobart, 1989, pp. 107-9 & GH Stancombe, 'Edward Boyd', *ADB* Vol 1, pp. 142-3 & AR Love, 'Robert Power', *ADB* Vol 2, pp. 348-9; K Fitzpatrick, 'Sir John Franklin' *ADB* Vol 1, pp 413-15

¹⁶John Franklin: first address to the Legislative Council', *Colonial Times* 11 July 1837

¹⁷*HTG* 30 November 1838, Col Secretary's Office 24 November 1838 Notices 233 & 234, & fees *HTG* 28 December 1838

of description ... 'because the lots were located in 'remote situations'.¹⁸ One was in the Vale of Cuvier and the other, westwards from the Derwent towards King William's Mountain.¹⁹ Although not immediately taken, the lots were significant in being located within The Reserve and representing the westward limit of New Country pastoral expansion. Stockmen for lessees such as John and Ebenezer Geiss, whose 2,000 acres centred on the Nive River,²⁰ were probably the first to have views of The Reserve for sustained periods over summer months.

Surveying took precedence over general exploration, partly because of anticipated revenue, £32,000, arising from sale of lots in the New Country.²¹ Again views of southern Reserve mountains became possible as they were on McKay's 1838 journey to Frenchman's Cap.²² In 1840 Calder and Alexander McKay, formerly with the VDL Company and now assigned to the Survey Department, made two forays westward from Great Lake in search of the headwaters of the Mersey. Each time 'most tempestuous weather' rendered further exploration nugatory. From McKay's Lookout, a point on the 'high mountain range ... [on] the brink of the valley of the Mersey River' they saw 'most astonishing Landscapes', with about 300 lakes and lagoons in every direction barring the west. Between the Mersey and Forth they sighted open country, February and Borradaile Plains, known to McKay by sight and from information given by Aborigines. Calder was surprised by 'mysterious traffic' in sheep which seemed to originate from New Country out-stations.²³ Perhaps the sheep were HM Howells' migrating from *Southernfield*

¹⁸First advertised *HTG* 22 July 1836 then *HTG* 21 December 1838 for the two 2,000 acre lots. The Vale of Cuvier lot was bounded in the north by Mt Olympus and the Cuvier River to the south west

¹⁹There was also a 5,000 acre lot between the Nive at Marlborough and the Wentworth Hills, *HTG* 22 July 1836

²⁰*HTG* 30 December 1838

²¹For their 1837 expedition from Mt Field to Lake Pedder area and return via the Huon see March 1837 LSD 1/4 p. 848 & Calder's reports of 2 April 1840, survey of Great Lake, & 19 Lagoons 5 June 1840 For Calder & Sprent's surveys near the Nive River see CSO 5/91/2025 p. 23

²²C Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, Launceston, 1980, pp. 144-8

²³J Calder to Col Secretary 5 June 1840, CSO 5/217/5527 pp. 71-2

near Bothwell to plains on the Mersey River.²⁴ Stock thieves droving via the Mersey Valley to northern Tasmania and illegal occupiers of Crown Land were potential viewers of Northern and Central Reserve.

Confronted by the need to house probationers, Franklin decided to investigate the suitability of the abandoned penal station at Macquarie Harbour.²⁵ In preparation for the journey, Calder explored the country west from St Clair.²⁶ From December 1840, Calder and convicts cut a track from Marlborough to St Clair and then westward, and, with assistance of Constable Clark, stationed at Marlborough, established a *depôt* at the Lake.²⁷ Simultaneously McKay, in Calder's words, 'this prince of bush travellers'²⁸ sought a 'Crow's-flight Track'²⁹ to the Frenchman, before abruptly ceasing work. Yet Calder may have been thinking of McKay when criticising Frankland for entrusting expeditions to 'illiterate persons, whose sole qualification was that they were good bush-travellers, and could stand anything. ... [but could not give] an intelligible report of what they saw.'³⁰

In late March 1842 the official party of Sir John and Lady Franklin departed Ouse Bridge.³¹ Lady Jane earlier had known 'mountain glory' having been entranced by

²⁴Either Humphrey Morgan Howells and sons Humphrey junr, Thomas & John. The last-mentioned was leasing 2,000 acres on the west bank of the Mersey, see *HTG* 10 October 1848. HM ceased active work in the early 1880s. His colonial life was full of incident; he was captured by Aborigines (the film *Manganinie* is based on this) & guided Irish Exile John Mitchel across the Plateau after his escape from Bothwell. *Examiner* 12 February 1901

²⁵J Franklin, *Narrative of Some Passages in the History of Van Diemen's Land During the Last three years of Sir John Franklin's Administration of its Government*, (facs edit) Hobart, 1967, p. 40

²⁶Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania', p. 201 'General Instructions for the Guidance of Mr Calder proceeding overland to Macquarie Harbour' CSO 5/267/6941

²⁷25 January 1841 CSO 8/30/489 & 16 March 1841 CSO 5/217/5521

²⁸JE Calder, *Recollections of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin in Tasmania*, Adelaide, 1984, p. 22 & similar sentiments in Calder, *Some account of the Wars, Extirpation, habits, etc of the native tribes of Tasmania*, (facs. edit) Hobart, 1972, p. 67

²⁹Calder to Col Sec, 28 December 1840, CSO 8/30/489 p. 155

³⁰Report of Select Committee on Survey Department, TPP [LC], 1852, No 59, p. 127

³¹D Burn, *Narrative of the Overland Journey of Sir John and Lady Franklin and Party from Hobart Town to Macquarie Harbour, 1842*, G Mackaness (ed), Sydney, 1955. Other members of the party

Alpine views surrounding Lake Geneva in 1813 and climbing Mt Olympus nearly twenty years later. On attempting to describe how Lake Geneva was 'encircled by its mountains in all the glory of the transcendent beauty', she confessed that she was lost for words:

I felt it, but I cannot describe it — my heart was full as if with joy, my imagination was satisfied, and I exclaimed 'It is all I could wish — it is as beautiful as I hoped it would be'.³²

In this exultation the governor's wife has been joined subsequently by countless walkers from all ranks of society.

Pastoralist-writer Burn dilated on the picturesque beauty west of the Clarence or the end of the New Country as 'the numerous distant majestic promontories stood out grand and glorious against the azure vault'.³³ In contrast, Calder, the Sandhurst graduate, noted 'occasional glimpses of very fine mountain scenery' with the most prominent, Mt Olympus, resembling the front of a huge mansion because of straight sides and level top.³⁴ If mountain scenery enticed, then St Clair tantalised because the excursionist knew the 'proximity to the extraordinary lake'.³⁵ Calder later remarked that the Lake pleased 'every visitor, capable of appreciating the beautiful of nature', excepting Sir William Denison. Franklin appreciated the entire landscape, the lake enclosed by dark forests above which towered the black basaltic columns of Olympus and Ida.³⁶ Burn's perceptions were conventional-Romantic, but within a Scottish frame of reference. 'Stupendous mountains' precluded distant views of the lake, resembling Scottish lochs but lacking their 'picturesque islets'. On the castle-like Olympus 'Each crag, each hollow shone bright with gold, else were lost in the

included ADC Lieut Bagot 51st Regt, Dr James Milligan, medical attendant and naturalist, David Burn, Calder, orderly Corporal Boyle, maid Miss Christina Stewart and convicts

³²F Woodward, *Portrait of Jane: a life of Lady Franklin*, London, 1951, pp. 132-3

³³Burn, *Narrative of the Overland Journey ...*, p. 12

³⁴Calder, *Recollections of the Franklins in Tasmania*, p. 48

³⁵Calder, *Recollections of the Franklins in Tasmania*, p. 49

³⁶Calder, *Recollections of the Franklins in Tasmania*, p. 51 & Calder, 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', p. 416

mighty obscurity of fathomless shade, filling the mind with vast imaginings too great for words'.³⁷ In his pre-occupation with mountain glory, Burn merely noted that buttongrass plains were marshy.

Of the remainder of this journey, only that section to Mt Arrowsmith is relevant.³⁸ The party, with convicts much encumbered by Lady Jane's luggage, crossed the Derwent 'above a fallen tree' probably used by a Macquarie Harbour escapee. The first lady had unique opportunities to observe landscape from the comfort of her palanquin before they camped eight miles from the Lake at The Ponds. There the 'grandeur of the landscape and the surpassing loveliness of the day imparted an inexpressible charm'.³⁹ They named the mountain range and plains after King William IV and had panoramic views of southern Reserve peaks such as snow-capped Cheyne's Mountain.⁴⁰ Franklin now perceived that difficulties of road construction and access far outweighed the costs of repairs to the Macquarie Harbour convict station. The official death knell to the proposal, which may have breathed new life into the west, was Franklin's recall in 1843.

Calder's trackwork awoke pastoral interest in south-west grazing areas. After Calder indicated the location of a million unoccupied acres, many applied for leases — despite, according to Calder, knowing 'no more of the place than they do of the interior of Africa'.⁴¹ In part the interest stemmed from Colonial Office edict of 1842 of an increase in the minimum price of crown lands to £1 per acre. Although

³⁷Burn, *Narrative of the Overland Journey ...*, p. 13

³⁸Burn, *Narrative of the Overland Journey ...*; Calder, *Recollections of the Franklins in Tasmania*, Calder, 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour' Fatigue Hill was subsequently named Mt Arrowsmith by Polish scientist-adventurer Count Strzelecki

³⁹Burn, *Narrative of the Overland Journey ...*, p. 14

⁴⁰Franks p. 205. Cheyne's Mt, named after the Director of Public Works and Director-General of Roads and Bridges, was superseded by Gell, not Franklin's son-in-law Rev JP Gell, but PH Gell, involved in the trig survey in the 1850s

⁴¹Select Committee Report on Survey Department, p. 129

the rule was not effective until 1844, the demand to purchase dramatically declined and remained at a low level for the rest of the decade.⁴² At this propitious time, the astute Clarke and his manager John Mainwaring Dixon led the vanguard of actual occupation in 1846. Unlike the Port Davey area, the Upper Derwent and Gordon River areas were used to depasture summer stock. Although Calder's plans to open the Port Davey country subsequently failed, the buttongrass myth retained its salience with prominent pastoralists leasing 1.5 million acres in the Gordon River country in 1849.⁴³

In June 1849 pastoral fever dampened when Surveyor General Power indicated that land between Frenchman's Cap and Port Davey was unavailable until properly surveyed.⁴⁴ Despite this, Deputy Surveyor General Hugh Cotton's Report of March 1850 and his 'General Report on the Progress of Operations West of the Derwent' in March 1851 testified to the myth's hold on government and private opinion. Cotton indicated that communication had opened pasture country such as King Williams Plains (40,000 acres), and Guelph's Plains (20,000), previously inaccessible. He indicated that sheep and cattle already occupied much of the 50,000 acres surveyed and subdivided between Olympus and Wyld's Crag. Furthermore around Port Davey was a million acres 'fit for almost immediate occupation of flocks.'⁴⁵ An unnamed settler declared Gordon Vale to be reminiscent of south England and the Isle of Wight. Then he foresaw that the 'verdant flats, undulating plains and downs, ... covered with luxuriant, but at present coarse, pastures. At the back, come out in stern relief chains of rugged and lofty mountains, partly covered with snow,' would 'be stocked with flocks and herds, and rejoice in homesteads and farms'. Others, more closely attached to terra firma,

⁴²Burroughs, *Britain and Australia 1831-1855*, Oxford, 1967, p. 335

⁴³Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania,' p. 208

⁴⁴HTG 6 January 1849

⁴⁵H Cotton, 'General Report on the Progress of Operations West of the Derwent', pp. 291-3 in HTG 8 April 1851

remembered that about 15 years earlier similar claims had been made about Marlborough.⁴⁶

Not all concurred with the official version of this pastoral Eden. Later, sceptical settlers informed pedestrian FJ Cockburn that Cotton's 'vision splendid' of unlimited pastoral prosperity arose from distant views rather than actual experience. In contrast, they saw it as a waste land, a 'dreary, barren, sour, and utterly useless country, where no kangaroo runs and no parrot flies.'⁴⁷ Even Cotton's colleagues, Power and Calder, contradicted his assessment, the former because of miscalculations about the area and the latter not regarding the far south-west as favourable country.⁴⁸

Man could and purportedly had improved Nature. In the early 1840s Sharland noted that Aborigines had burnt the marshes near the Derwent during a summer.⁴⁹ Firing the pyrogenic buttongrass⁵⁰ promoted new growth and dried the land. HM Hull statistician and public servant, avowed fires promoted 'a much finer description of grass' and grazing by cattle and sheep produced clover and English grasses, and native grasses respectively.⁵¹ Government expenditure facilitated communication by widening the road, now suitable for carts, from Marlborough to northern King William's Plains with a branch between Wentworth Hills and Mt Charles across the Derwent thence southward to Guelph Plains and the head of the Gordon. Detailed surveys of allotments made available 50,000 acres between Wyld's Crag and Mt

⁴⁶HTC 3 January 1852

⁴⁷FJ Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, Calcutta, 1856, pp. 80-1. For Cotton's actual visits to Mt Picton, King William's Mount and Florentine Valley and areas not visited see Select Committee Report on Survey Department, pp. 116-7

⁴⁸Select Committee Report on Survey Department, p. 30 for Calder & p. 130 for Power

⁴⁹Sharland, 'Rough Notes of a journal of expedition to the Westward', p. 4

⁵⁰For a botanical discussion of this see Jarman, Kantvilas & Brown, *Buttongrass moorland in Tasmania*, pp. 79-90

⁵¹HM Hull, *The experience of forty years in Tasmania*, London, 1859, p. 73 & for a biography, L Andel, *Clerk of the House: the reminiscences of Hugh Munro Hull*, Melbourne, 1984

Olympus. Pertinent were lots west of the Derwent such as the Franklin River under Mt Hugel, northern King William's Plains and Navarre Plains. This phase of surveying was facilitated by trig stations on Wyld's Crag, Mts Hobhouse and King William's.⁵²

Pastoral activity was not confined to the south. Stockmen frequented the Walls of Jerusalem-Upper Mersey plains from the early 1840s, possibly earlier. By Surveyor James Scott's visit in December 1848, which resulted in the first map of the area, transhumance was established. William Field and sons William junr, Thomas, John and Charles,⁵³ and the Howells occupied plains on the Mersey and may have entered the central Reserve after additional grazing land or searching for cattle. From the VDL Company and Field's leases on Middlesex and Emu Plains, expeditions to Pelion Plains via Borradaile and February Plains were possible. There were views of and possibly visits to the central and northern Reserve.

Of the fourfold land classification under the regulations of July 1848, only 'country' and 'special country' were relevant. Pertinent conditions included non-transferrable depasturing licences costing £1 per hundred acres payable a year in advance with a ten year renewal option. Applicants had to describe 'as minutely as possible the situation of the land with reference to some known point', with lots ranging from 500 to 5,000 acres. Tenure was theoretically tenuous with resumption for sale 'or for any public purpose' a possibility, although there was compensation for improvements. To settle all conflicting claims a Board was created.⁵⁴

⁵²HTC 27 March 1851; a summary is provided by Naval Paymaster, R Malone, *Three years' cruise in the Australian Colonies*, London, 1854, pp. 36-7 & H Cotton, 'General report on the Progress of Operations West of the Derwent', pp. 291-3

⁵³For the Fields see N Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, Canberra, 1998, pp. 32-36 & C Dean, *Cattle King of Van Diemen's Land: William Field (1774-1837)*, Margate, Tas, 1998, passim

⁵⁴HTG 4 July 1848 Government Notice 67; the Board comprised the Surveyor-General, Port Officer and Chairman of Commissioners

A brief description and analysis of Governor WT Denison's views on land illuminates waste land regulations. Underlying Denison's attitude towards disposal of Crown lands was a wish to develop a yeoman or 'small Proprietary' class which, he avowed, would provide social and industrial advantages to the colony.⁵⁵ Denison drew sustenance from Colonial Secretary Earl Grey's 1850 comments that the 'present price of Land is not too high ... and that the rent of sheep runs is reasonable.'⁵⁶ A memorandum of March 1850 implemented his philosophy. To ensure speedy occupation of land, surveys were to be approximate and vary in size from 2,000 to 10,000 acre lots according to 'their natural and marked boundaries'. Lots were to contain a fair share of marsh, hill and timber, but not so much as to render land 'valueless both to the sheep owner and the Government'. Conversely, each lot was not to include an 'undue proportion of best land'. That Denison's views were pro-pastoralist was confirmed by the declaration that boundaries should be located between 'lines of timber or along Belts of Scrub, so as to facilitate in every way the work of the sheep owner' and to reduce labour and expence of fencing.⁵⁷

Clarke and Dixon revealed difficulties associated with land regulations in remote areas. With the purchase of *Norton Mandeville* in 1846, Clarke acquired a property strategically located for New Country pastoralism. Most probably Clarke had prior knowledge of the unoccupied land and its pastoral potential. Following exploratory trips west of the Derwent, Dixon sought five years rental at the upset price. Both before and after the purchase of *Ellangowan* in 1849 Clarke paid rent on only a fraction of the area he depastured stock.⁵⁸ The next year matters came to a head when government surveyors discovered stock ranging over 18,000 acres. To deny this dishonesty, Dixon, no doubt with Clarke's full support, identified surveying

⁵⁵*TPP* [LC] Votes & Proceedings, 13 October 1857, pp. 2-3

⁵⁶Earl Grey to Denison, No 134, 15 August 1850 in *TPP* [LC], 1857, No 8, p. 3

⁵⁷W Denison, 'Country West of the Derwent' 1 March 1850, LSD 1/54/60

⁵⁸M Clarke, *"Big" Clarke*, Carlton, Victoria, 1980, pp. 119 & 92. Clarke paid rent on 6,140 acres while grazing sheep for three summers on a much larger area

errors. There were discrepancies of some miles between advertised locations and maps on some lots located west of the Derwent and south from St Clair.⁵⁹ Then Dixon sought special treatment for the 'vast deal of trouble and expense' involved in discovering and occupying country which otherwise 'would in all probability have remained an unoccupied waste to the present time'. (That the country already had been discovered and partly occupied mattered not a whit.) Furthermore Dixon emphasised the unfairness of allowing other parties to benefit from his occupation and improvements such as fencing. Although three quarters of Lots 140 and 146, (6,300 and 4,200 acres respectively) were 'totally useless and unfit for grazing purposes', Dixon had the effrontery to request a licence because they adjoined an existing lease. He also sought 'those portions of these lots we have applied for' or else 'to occupy the whole at a reduced rate, the value of which to be ascertained by a competent disinterested person'.⁶⁰ Dixon took offense at charges of 'unauthorised occupation of Crown land' but admitted that 10,000 sheep 'ran over perhaps double' the area paid for because of surveying delays. With a mixture of audacity and aplomb, he suggested that if wrong lots were occupied the government should refund rental paid and compensate for improvements. His occupation should continue as other pastoralists, Messrs Barker, Fenton and Thomson, had no desire for land in this area.⁶¹ Denison ordered a re-survey⁶² and reduced Clarke's leaseholds 18,000 to 10,290 acres. Dixon, however, won the war when he paid rental for the additional 4,000 acres for only a year.⁶³

⁵⁹The 1852 Select Committee Report on Survey Department, noted unsatisfactory 'partial surveys' and resultant maps being used 'to mark off and calculate the areas of blocks of land for leasing'. Calder noted that PH Gell drew plans containing many unsurveyed lots. As well there was a lack of duplicates of charts in the Survey Office. pp. 12, 29 & 35

⁶⁰Dixon to Surveyor General Power 4 November 1850, CSO 24/270/5317, pp. 125-8

⁶¹Dixon to Surveyor General Power 14 November 1850, CSO 24/270/5317, pp. 135-6

⁶²CSO 24/270/5317, Dixon to Surveyor General Power 14 November 1850, pp. 131-3

⁶³Dixon to Denison 4 November 1850, CSO 24/270/5317 pp. 135-6

In an attempt to reverse the emigration of colonial youth, Denison offered incentives under the 'Quiet Enjoyment' or 'Pre-emptive' regulations of November 1851. These rules were applicable to the 'unsettled districts' to the west of The Reserve.⁶⁴ Overall, especially in the north-east and north-west, the regulations failed, leading to their suspension in June 1854.⁶⁵ Details are irrelevant to this narrative as the existing pattern of land occupation persisted. In practice, land became available when leaseholds and licences expired or occupants relinquished tenure. Two examples will suffice. By March 1856 lots in the Upper Gordon and Derwent basins and between Frenchman's Cap and Port Davey were advertised as being accessible to sheep and cattle. Those interested included lower Derwent Valley pastoralists such as JC Jamieson, Richard Barker junr, and JT Fenton.⁶⁶ More detailed surveys provided additional information about specific locations. Thus Calder's work on Vale of Cuvier in 1857 linked Reserve grazing with the wider New Country-west of Derwent system. After investigating west of and between Lake Petrarch and base of Mts Moore (presumably Mt Byron) and Manfred, Calder discovered that the only suitable grazing area, approximately 1,800 acres, was within the surveyed lot in the Cuvier Valley.⁶⁷

As the colony verged toward stagnation from 1854, many residents headed towards gold-rich Victoria. To overcome this inertia many reiterated Denison's philosophy of establishing a 'Rural Yeomanry' in unsettled areas. In part governments heeded these calls and passed the 1858 Waste Lands Act.⁶⁸ Only third class or pastoral

⁶⁴HTG 4 November 1851, Government Notice 114, from the mouth of the Arthur to the Surrey Hills and then south to South West Cape; for further comment see Burroughs, *Britain and Australia*, p. 344

⁶⁵J Fenton, *Bush Life in Tasmania fifty years ago*, (facs edit) Devonport, 1964, p. 104 claimed that of the 260,000 acres selected, nearly 210,000 were returned to the Crown & C Ramsay, *With the Pioneers*, Latrobe, 1980, pp. 45-8 for failure.

⁶⁶Cotton, 'General Report on the Progress of Operations West of the Derwent', & HTG 6 January & 1 July 1856

⁶⁷Correspondence between Calder & Cotton August 1857 LSD 1/54/85

⁶⁸Waste Lands Act 1858 21^o Vict No 33 & 'Petition from Hobart Town — Disposal of the Waste Lands', *TPP* [LC] 1857, No 26

lands, which were deemed 'unsuitable for cultivation', are pertinent. As with the 1848 Regulations, applicants had to describe with 'all practicable Precision the Locality and Boundaries' of their intended lots. For land never held previously under a grazing licence, the upset price was 5/- per acre, while for other lands the price was £1 per acre. Land was inalienable till paid, the maximum term for leases was 14 years. As well, twelve month occupation licences were available and there were procedures for dispossession of illegal occupants.⁶⁹ As the Clarke case illustrated, theory of the law and its implementation could be entirely different.

Complementary legislation was the 1858 Unsettled Lands Act to 'promote the Occupation and Settlement ... of certain portion ... of the Colony' by offering previously unsettled lands on more liberal terms. In contrast to the Waste Lands Act, the area involved was more clearly defined to include lands west of a line from South Coast to the Derwent, top of King William Mount, Mt Hugel, Barn Bluff, and from Surrey Hills to Arthur River. Calder explained that the acts were designed to reduce government expenditure and recognised that large quantities of land were unsold because the great bulk is 'mere rough pasture ... that is no more worth the price we affix to it than sixpence is worth half a crown, and so it remains unpurchased'.⁷⁰ Conditions of settlement such as areas, rental terms and methods of payment were defined.

Three years later Calder indicated strong demand for land: 81,520 acres leased and applications for an additional 158,555 acres much improved by burning and

⁶⁹Waste Lands Act 1858

⁷⁰Unsettled Lands Act 1858 21st Vict No 34. That these acts reflected Denison's earlier philosophy can be seen in Government Orders 26 March 1857, & Calder, 'Report of Surveyor-General in reference to reduction of amount estimated for contract Surveys', *TPP* [H of A] 1863, No 13. Settlers in these areas could be granted between 50 and 640 acres providing they fulfilled capital requirements, including livestock or equipment, equal to £1 for every acre applied for. The five year grant had residence and cultivation conditions attached. In addition parcels of land less than 10,000 acres could be let for ten years at a peppercorn rent providing a specified number of cattle and/or sheep, 100 sheep or 20 cattle for each 1000 acres demised, grazed on the land for part of each year

stocking.⁷¹ Despite these figures, potential selectors or speculators began to forfeit leases, that applying to eighty of the 101 located in the south-west.⁷² In the north-west speculators' blocks extended from Port Sorell to Table Cape, sometimes extending twelve miles inland.⁷³ This speculation, and the absence of access roads, were the shoals on which the yeoman dream foundered. Overall development of the region and the opening up of the Cradle country were retarded.

Under the 1863 Waste Lands Act, occupation licences of 10,000 acres became available for 14 years while stock numbers were reduced and depasturing time increased. Credit provisions, regardless of occupation or improvement, were eased thus benefiting newcomers and beneficiaries of earlier land regulations. Existing landholders benefited with pre-emptive licensees granted an extension of time for payments while rights of quiet enjoyment holders were transferred to occupation licences. In a portent of the future, the act contained specific mineral clauses despite the absence of large scale mining fields.⁷⁴ As with earlier legislation, the 1863 Act failed to establish a yeomanry. Collapse of grain markets and stagnation dogged the colony between this act and the 1870 Waste Lands Act, which remained operational for twenty years. With increased prosperity arising from mining, dreams of creating a yeoman class receded but were never fully vanquished.

⁷¹*Tasmanian Land Gazette* 1 July 1862, p. 6 in 'Lands of Tasmania: Statistical Returns Compiled by the Surveyor General', *TPP* [H of A] 1862, No. 46

⁷²*HTG* 17 January 1860 for leases in Unsettled Districts. Of 101 leases forfeited 80 were described as being in vicinity of Frenchman's Cap, with 7 around Port Davey, Huon Plains, River Gordon, Mt Hobhouse and other localities. Lessees included Hobart solicitors such as Morton Allport, politicians TD Chapman and merchant landowners such as Askin Morrison

⁷³For general discussion of these measures see HJW Stokes, 'North-West Tasmania 1858-1910: the establishment of an agricultural community', PhD (History), Australian National University, 1969, pp. 58-62, For land, Fenton, *Bush Life*, pp. 298-9 & 318 & B Denholm, *The Irrepressible Mr Dooley, The 'Boanerge' of Tasmania's North-West Coast*, Howrah, 1980, p. 41

⁷⁴Waste Lands Act 1863, 27^o Vict No 22

In the north-west attention turned to areas available under waste lands acts including country north of Cradle. In 1864 rambunctious Surveyor James Dooley, later politician-speculator, extolled the Vale of Belvoir as

a beautiful country, well adapted for European emigrants, and a position from which a Colony would expand and radiate in all directions, attracted by the extensive tracts of fine pasture lands bordering on Middlesex Plains and Surrey Hills, and that extensive unknown region to the south and west, with all its glimmering indications of wealth, mineral, pastoral and agricultural.⁷⁵

Dooley proposed construction of roads from settled districts to develop a trade in native pine, (outlined in Chapter 9) and to encourage exploration of the 'undoubted auriferous country'. Calder, a long time advocate for a northerly extension from the St Clair road, believed that such pasture lands would be readily stocked from flocks around the Lakes, in the south and north.⁷⁶

In August 1863 Thomas Field of *Westfield* proposed that he and his brother William be allowed to buy 5,000 acres in unsettled districts. Field claimed that as 'we have pioneered the settled part of Tasmania, ... if you give us encouragement, we will try the unsettled.' Calder encouraged the brothers suggesting that Gordon Burgess should re-examine the pastoral prospects of country earlier traversed by VDL Company explorers. By opening up the country, Calder thought the colony would reduce meat imports and help increase wool production.⁷⁷

Trigonometrical Survey

The results of and deficiencies in surveying have been mentioned. Further discussion is warranted because the state trigonometrical survey included The Reserve within its purview. Perhaps from his experience of the great Indian trigonometric survey when Surveyor-General in Poona, Frankland envisaged that a

⁷⁵'Crown Lands Reports 1864', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No 19, p. 3 According to N Haygarth, it is doubtful if Dooley ever visited the Vale

⁷⁶'Crown Lands Reports 1864', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No 19, p. 4

⁷⁷'Crown Lands Reports 1864', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No 19, pp. 5-6

local survey would provide information for a general map of the island with accurately delineated natural features and administrative boundaries.⁷⁸

Although the survey commenced in 1832, progress was due to James Sprent, and to a lesser extent, Calder who subsequently described the process of 'erection of these shapeless and transitory monuments ... as grave a deception as ever practised'.⁷⁹ Activity ceased in 1837 due to an inevitable collision between practical needs of colonists whose boundaries, albeit inaccurate, had been fixed and the precision of trig surveying, which rendered existing boundaries void, and the ever-recurring need to reduce government expenditure.⁸⁰ Following the recommencement of work in 1847, over the next decade Sprent viewed the Reserve from many locations: the Cradle, Mt Roland, across the Central Plateau, Wyld's Crag, the Frenchman and Eldons. Taking numerous observations and constructing markers, wooden and stone, provided concentrated viewing over several days for the various parties. In climbing Olympus and Cradle, The Reserve's northern and southern custodians, Sprent encountered severe weather. In the south local shepherds 'say that the season is a very unfavourable one', while he claimed he to have nearly lost use of his left arm in the north.⁸¹ Perhaps this accounted for his unfavourable assessment that 'here is barrenness in every direction; but still it is a country highly interesting to the geologist, but little so to the settler'. Cradle was 'amongst the highest in the colony' and Barn Bluff was also of great height.⁸² Personal rivalry and desire to salvage or retain reputations, and doubts about the cost, value and possible completion of the survey prompted Parliament in 1857 to establish a Select

⁷⁸See *HRA 3, VI*, p 167 for Dumaresq's opposition to trigonometric surveys, for general details see Report from the Select Committee on the Survey Department', *passim*

⁷⁹*Mercury* 27 October 1881 & 'Report from the Select committee on the Survey Department', pp. 9-10

⁸⁰'Report of the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the Present State of the Trigonometrical Survey', *TPP [LC]*, 1857, No 32, pp. 17-18

⁸¹20 January 1853 LSD 1/81/29; 1 April 1854 LSD 1/81/37; Jones, *Hindsight*, pp. 144-5

⁸²H Butler Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, London, 1856, (facs edit) Hobart, 1982, p. 290

Committee, ironically headed by JH Wedge, whose surveying accuracy had been questioned in the past. Not surprisingly evidence was conflicting on all major points such as accuracy and possibility of melding chain and trig surveys. However, amidst the welter of conflicting claims, it was revealed that key rivers draining the Reserve country or adjacent areas such as the Gordon and Mackintosh, Mersey, Forth, Shannon and Ouse were either unsurveyed or incomplete.⁸³

A Golden Catalyst?

As indicated, discovery of gold in New South Wales and Port Phillip in the early 1850s resulted in many departing the island. Initial apprehension about an influx of undesirables and possible adverse affects on convicts were replaced by visions of wealth for the colonies.⁸⁴ In June 1851 influential geologist Rev WB Clarke predicted that gold probably would be found from Lake St Clair to King's River, and between Mount Humboldt and Western Bluff and in latitude 42°S and longitude 146°E. In contrast to Governor Denison's inaction, private citizens, such as JA Thomson, began to search the west.⁸⁵ To avert 'irrevocable ruin', a local Gold Committee, which offered a £500 reward for discovery south of 42° latitude,⁸⁶ drew

⁸³'Correspondence between the Chairman of the Select Committee upon the Trigonometrical Survey and the Colonial Treasurer', *TPP* [LC] 1857, No 31 & 'Report of the Select Committee ... into the Present State of the Trigonometrical Survey'. In 1860 William Hogan prepared a map based on Sprent's triangulations, Jones, *Hindsight*, pp. 151-2 & 'Report of the Select Committee appointed to enquire into the Present State of the Trigonometrical Survey', *TPP* [LC], 1857, No. 32, p. 22

⁸⁴For adverse affects see *HTC* 13 September 1851 & 'Grievances' *TPP* [LC] 1862, No 60; for general views on this period see G Roberts, 'The Role of the Government in the development of the Tasmanian metal mining industry: 1803-1883', MA (Hist) University of Tasmania, 1997, pp. 18-65

⁸⁵For Rev WB Clarke see E Grainger, *The remarkable Rev Clarke*, Melbourne, 1982 & a summary of geological studies *Examiner* 5 June 1958. For Thomson *HTC* 23 August 1851, JA Thomson, self-proclaimed first and pre-eminent searcher for gold, informed a meeting of the Gold Committee in Hobart 1851 that the island contained as much gold as California and more than at Bathurst in New South Wales. He outlined prospecting activities during the preceding two years, including activities near Frenchman's Cap. Thomson later advertised his support for prospectors in *Examiner* 3 January 1859

⁸⁶*HTC* 6 September for Thomson's declaration of ruination & 13 September 1851 for reward and list of subscribers

sustenance from Strzelecki's earlier predictions of possible finds between Lake St Clair and Frenchmans Cap area and Rev Clarke's advice to the Gold Committee.⁸⁷

Gold fever was heightened by other reports. The *Hobart Town Courier* published a letter from Turon anticipating the finding of gold in VDL because the precious metal

is so broken up with intrusive rocks of every kind, that it must be there. ... quartz rocks were not accurate indicators unless containing intrusive rocks, whose rubble is rich ... in clay banks on river bends. Wherever clay slates or limestones are broken up by these igneous rocks, there you will find much gold in the streams.⁸⁸

Such supposed scientific information delivered in authoritative manner seemed compelling,⁸⁹ especially when rumour was rife.⁹⁰

Contract surveyor, Gordon Walter Burgess⁹¹ working between St Clair and the Eldons for Sprent's Trigonometrical Survey in November 1852, tested Clarke's hypothesis. After initially following Frankland's track up the Cuvier Valley, Burgess followed a ridge westward towards Gould's Sugarloaf. The party ventured towards but did not investigate the Eldon Range, then ascended the West Coast Range only to find gorges and valleys, scrub and forest extending coastwards. Despite not being able to reach Circular Head via Mt Heemskirk and a coastal route, the trip opened the way for subsequent exploration having proved the feasibility of a

⁸⁷*Cornwall Chronicle* 25 August 1851 for meeting of gold committee & *HTC* 18 October 1851 for Cornwall meeting of Committee; *HTC* 22 October 1851 for expedition via Huon to head of Derwent; For Clarke's prediction see *Examiner* 1 December 1853

⁸⁸*HTC* 3 January 1852

⁸⁹*HTC* 3 January 1852; for another contemporary boom account from an artistic Englishman, see F Penn-Smith, *The Unexpected*, London, 1933, pp. 98-100

⁹⁰There was a report of gold in a Launceston gravel pit but in insufficient quantities to pay for working, *Cornwall Chronicle* 15 November 1851

⁹¹Burgess was son of police magistrate and politician Francis Burgess, see GM O'Brien, 'Francis Burges', *ADB* Vol 1, pp. 180-1 GW Burgess resigned from the Survey Department, but after a short stint in Western Australia returned to Tasmania. He worked with Charles Gould and later died while on duty in 1876.

track between the settled districts and West Coast. Burgess' party probably would have had spectacular views of the western boundary of The Reserve.⁹²

Small finds of gold in the Fingal Valley did not amount to a rush, and initial prosperity from supplying palings and shingles to mainland goldfields diminished. Then came the double-edged sword of self-government in 1856. Political independence was accompanied by economic hardship as British funding decreased. In March 1858 the Smith Government created a post of Government Geologist, which they hoped Rev Clarke would fill. When Clarke declined because of ill-health, Charles Gould, with experience of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, was appointed.⁹³ Although asserting that the appointee would produce a state geological map and a book on mines and geology within six years, the Government hoped for, and almost demanded, the discovery of a major goldfield.

In an attempt to prevent a slowdown from becoming a depression, Hobart and Launceston businessmen sponsored further gold searches. Notable among searchers was Irishman, William Alcock Tully,⁹⁴ and assistant, Aldophus Ibsen, who in January 1859 explored between Lake St Clair and Frenchman's Cap. They compared the scenery with the old world Arcadian and Pyrranean and noted the geological structure. Tully asserted that southern Reserve mountains such as Gell, or the Twelve Apostles, whose 'summit bears the closest resemblance I have ever yet seen to an old crater' were volcanic. His route along the Collingwood Valley was later utilised as the Lyell Highway. Thus there were now high and low level routes, Burgess' and Tully's respectively, to the West. As for the main purpose of the trip,

⁹²HTC 7 June 1853, Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 161-2 & 20 & 30 January, 21 February 1853, LSD 1/81/29

⁹³HTG 19 July 1859 Govt Notice 121 of 18 July 1859; for biographical details see MR Banks & ML Yaxley, 'Charles Gould', *ADB* Vol 4, pp. 277-8

⁹⁴Tully had previously crossed the area two years before, ascending Frenchman's Cap with CA Glover and FN Spong. In July 1859 Tully was appointed Mining Commissioner on the Fingal gold fields, HTG 5 July 1859

despite frequent panning and sinking holes they failed to produce large finds of gold. In addition to the usual views, the party enjoyed new vistas of the Reserve from the Eldon country. Fossils were found near Lake Dixon but, eluding re-discovery on return, prevented determination of 'the age of the rocks, ... [which would] afford a key to the geological history of the western country.'⁹⁵ Although specific hopes were dashed, wider speculation persisted in the more remote west and elsewhere.

There was no southern monopoly on prospecting with James Jones asserting that he and James Dooley had detected favourable signs about 1856-7 in the the Upper Forth.⁹⁶ In two expeditions in 1859 James 'Philosopher' Smith, Jones and J Johnson found traces in the same area. Such was the enthusiasm that public meetings raised funds for a track from the Forth to the Gads Hill-Middlesex Plains area.⁹⁷ The *Cornwall Chronicle's* caution against instant miracles and support for a systematic survey by a professional geologist contrasted with subsequent demands for instant auriferous gratification. Goldfields at Black Boy, Fingal Valley,⁹⁸ and Surveyor Peter Lette's party discovery of payable quantities in the north-west in November 1859, heightened the fever.⁹⁹ Lette's prediction of 'a rich field, both of alluvial diggings and quartz reefs' between the Forth and the Arthur divide were not confirmed by the Upper Forth investigations of RC Gunn, Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵For a contemporary outline of Tully's career see *Examiner* 5 June 1858; for his 1860 visit to the North West see *Examiner* 12 April 1860 & WA Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold in the Neighbourhood of Frenchman's Cap', *HTG Extraordinary* 17 May 1859; also *Mercury* 26 & 27 April 1859

⁹⁶*Cornwall Chronicle* 6 August 1859

⁹⁷Ramsay, *With the Pioneers*, p. 90; *Examiner* 5 July & 20 August 1859 also carried details of meetings. Thanks to N haygarth for these references

⁹⁸*Examiner* 5 November 1859

⁹⁹For Lette's discovery above the junction of the Inglis and Calder Rivers see *Examiner* 1 November 1859

¹⁰⁰For predictions, *Cornwall Chronicle* 29 June 1859, James Jones claimed that he and Surveyor Dooley were the actual discoverers in 1857, *Cornwall Chronicle* 9 July 1859; for instant goldfields, *Cornwall Chronicle* 16 July 1859; for Lette *Examiner* 1 & 17 November 1859 & Gunn

While investigating mineral discoveries, Gunn twice journeyed from Surrey Hills to the Forth. From Valentine's Peak he observed that open country, Hounslow Heath, between Bond's Plain and Cradle, was the best line for a track permitting 'southern flockowners' to move sheep here. Gunn's optimism about this northern section was qualified by self-acknowledged ignorance of the country between Cradle and Marlborough. He opined that the severe climate arising from its elevation allowed only summer depasturing. Inducements were large areas of open country south and west of Middlesex Plains and also on Vale of Belvoir, where large herds of the Fields' cattle grazed. Gunn explored the country north of the Iris-Fall (Hellyer's Lea) rivers¹⁰¹ so again sightings of the Cradle and Barn were probable. He indicated the need to publish old journals of discovery, government and VDL Company surveyors, to avoid confusion associated with re-naming.¹⁰²

In mid-November 1859 a Hobart deputation successfully petitioned Governor Sir Henry Fox Young to allow Lette and Gould to examine the country between Lake Petrarch and Hellyer River. Two parties were sanctioned: a northern, under Gunn's command, was to explore country south of Lette's finds which did not belong to VDL Company, while Gould's southern group were to proceed from Lake Petrarch to the Eldon Ranges. Because of his inexperience in colonial conditions, Gould had to provide a geological report, while a surveyor would assess pastoral and agricultural potential. Both parties were to be accompanied by practical diggers.¹⁰³

Examiner 7 January 1860; In Christmas-New Year of 1859-1860, Gunn found the 'quantity was exceedingly small and the particles excessively minute'.

¹⁰¹Mr Gunn's Report: Exploration of the Northern Country', *TPP* [H of A] 1860, No 11, p. 8 & *Examiner* 11 & 21 August 1860

¹⁰²Mr Gunn's Report: Exploration of the Northern Country', pp. 10 & 8. Gunn cited the example of Eldon Range with Hellyer and Sprent disagreeing: the former's was Mt Farrell while the latter cartographically placed it in its present position.

¹⁰³*Examiner* 19 November & 1 December 1859 & *Mercury* 10 December 1859 for discussion about starting point for exploration

From late December 1859 until April 1860 Gould's party explored between Lake St Clair, the Eldons and towards Mount Murchison. From Lake St Clair the party cleared a new road to the Cuvier river. Steep banks and thick scrub, hitherto a barrier to extension of sheep-runs into the Valley, reduced the road to a path sufficient for bullocks. While a log hut depôt was erected at the head of the Cuvier Valley, Gould examined the country between Mts Arrowsmith and Hugel. Burgess attempted to decipher the geological structure and detected a thin uneconomic coal seam while his leader observed the link between vegetation changes and altered geological conditions. The 'confused mass of mountain summits of the wildest and most rugged character' of the Du Cane Range reflected mountain gloom. The Murchison valley as it extended 'northward to the Cradle, choked with dense forest and bounded by precipices and rugged mountains, appeared so impenetrable and repulsive' that Gould foresook his intention of proceeding along it. Instead the party travelled along Burgess' earlier route towards the South Eldon Range and further westward they detected signs of Tully's party burnoffs the previous year. All the while they prospected. Near Mt Murchison, the group divided: Gould ventured north to Middlesex Plains, while Burgess headed north-westerly exploring between Granite Rivulet and Mackintosh Rivers. The former became the first to transverse the western boundary of The Reserve and found the open plains south of Cradle, ie around Lake Will, to be unfit for occupation because of elevation and exposure. Presumably his path thence to Cradle approximated the modern day Overland Track. This was the first known approach to Cradle from the Murchison via Bluff River. The return trip from Field's stock-keepers hut on Middlesex was marred by a fortnight's delay due to bad weather, 'commencing as usual with rain and ending with snow as the wind drew round to the south.' Gould prospected and explored around Lake Dixon before meeting Burgess who had sounded Lake St Clair.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴All references in this paragraph are from 'A report of the Western country by Mr Gould', *TPP*

Gould provided detailed topographical information and names of key mountains — with the exception of Gould!¹⁰⁵ The wider public became aware of his and Gunn's earlier report when the *Examiner* published extracts from the parliamentary papers.¹⁰⁶ Much of the western boundary had been traversed and an overland crossing to the north was proven possible. In providing the most detailed geological information thus far, Gould reflected current theories. In the Cuvier Valley Gould observed 'the similarity to the terminal moraine of a glacier presented by an enormous accumulation of boulders which chokes the lower end of the valley'¹⁰⁷ and suggested that glacial action shaped highland valleys. He estimated the extent of the dolerite sheet which covered the Highlands, the depth of St Clair, and refuted Strzelecki's claim that granite formed the base of dividing range between St Clair and Frenchman's. For colonists these were insignificant compared with his conclusion that the country was not auriferous. His recommended route to the West Coast, subsequently followed by the Lyell Highway, was of future benefit.¹⁰⁸

Government funding lapsed until many Tasmanians were lured by gold rushes across the Tasman Sea.¹⁰⁹ Gould's report on his second expedition in 1862 to the west coast was couched in generalities: strong probabilities of a goldfield but precise location, extent and richness were unknown. He stressed that systematic investigation was more likely to find mineral than 'chance discoveries of casual investigations' and that that assay results from small samples were not definitive predictors of wealth or auriferous character of an area. Few cared for such thoughts

¹⁰⁵Olympus, Byron and Manfred, Coal Hill, Little Sugar Loaf and Gt Sugar Loaf, Amphitheatre, Hugel, Ossa, Pelion, Barn and the Cradle

¹⁰⁶*Examiner* 11 August 1860

¹⁰⁷Gould, 'Exploration of the Western Country', p. 11

¹⁰⁸Gould, 'Exploration of the Western Country', p. 11, & *Examiner* 21 August 1860, Binks, *Explorers of Western Tasmania*, pp. 170-75

¹⁰⁹J Fenton to J Smith, 23 September 1861 in *James Fenton of Forth: a Tasmanian pioneer, 1820-1901: a collection of essays by and about James Fenton (1820-1901), his family and friends*, (comp & ed) Paul Fenton, Burwood, Vic, 2001, p. 256

as long as a goldfield was found.¹¹⁰ Despite this disappointment, the Government financed another expedition the following year. It was not a case of third time lucky, with Gould regretting that the 'whole of the country tested by the Expedition does not contain gold in sufficient quantities to form a paying Gold-field'.¹¹¹ Although he surveyed much of the North East and North West until early 1870s, this was Gould's western swansong. Official hopes plummeted but hope sprang eternal in individuals.

The *Hobart Town Courier* evoked the rampant gold fever of the period by commenting that 'Men do nothing now but think gold, speak gold ...'¹¹² Hopes were illusory to individuals and companies: of 90 gold mining companies in 1870 only two remained five years later.¹¹³ A typical expedition was the William Robert Bell¹¹⁴ and Leopold Von Bibra exploration of Mount Roland to Middlesex Plains and Gad's Hill in November-December 1861. Using personal knowledge from the field and results of others, Bell publicly cast doubts on Rev Clarke's infallibility. He concurred that gold existed in Tasmania — but around Fingal, not in the west. More important views of northern mountains were obtained from other angles.¹¹⁵ Mining engineer Albert Dumaesq, George Forster and William Robertson spent four fruitless months at Mt Arrowsmith over the summer of 1862-63. The assay report noted that the samples were 'certainly ... the poorest ... I ever examined, both

¹¹⁰*Mercury* 14 May 1862 & *Examiner* 15 May 1862; *Examiner* 10 January, 26 March, 21 April, 9 June 1863; 'Macquarie Harbour: report of the Government Geologist', *TPP* [H of A] 1862, No 26

¹¹¹'Report of the Government Geologist on the Western Country', *TPP* [LC] 1863, No 1a

¹¹²*HTC* 11 October 1851

¹¹³J Fenton, *A history of Tasmania: from its discovery in 1642 to the present time*, (facs edit), Hobart, 1978, p. 387

¹¹⁴For autobiographical detail of the native of Lincolnshire, see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Hobart, 1900, pp. 294-5

¹¹⁵For Calder *Mercury* 13 April 1860; for Gunn, 'Mr Gunn's Report: Exploration of the Northern Country', *TPP* [H of A], 1860, No 11, p. 3; for Bell and Von Bibra *Examiner* 26 April & 5 May 1862; for Bell's views on Clarke see *Examiner* 15 May 1862 & *Cornwall Chronicle* 12 March 1870

in appearance and results.¹¹⁶ Morton Allport's walking party to Lake St Clair accepted Forster's invitation to stay at Diggers Camp, The Beehives, and provided details about mining life. With the possible exception of trig survey parties, Dumaresq's group probably enjoyed the most sustained views of The Reserve thus far. James Whyte, subsequently Tasmanian Premier, had prospected this area in 1858.¹¹⁷

More important was the work of James 'Philosopher' Smith, the self-taught geologist who after casual prospecting in the early 1850s gained experience on mainland fields. As Haygarth has covered his life comprehensively in *Baron Bischoff*,¹¹⁸ only a brief overview is required. For six years from 1853 Smith was a struggling farmer until his previously mentioned discoveries in 1859. He continued to prospect westwards from the Forth and south to high country around Cradle Mountain. During October 1871 Smith prospected from Forth to the Surrey Hills before finding tin on Mount Bischoff on 4 December. The mining of the first ore in early 1873 began one of the greatest success stories in mining history. Despite resigning as a director of the Mount Bischoff Tin Mining Company, Smith was accorded public recognition in 1878 when he received a vice regal tribute and a public testimonial, including money.¹¹⁹

Appreciation of the Landscape

Underlying appreciation of wild mountain landscapes were Romantic attitudes. While many had long experience of Tasmanian life, there was scant evidence of

¹¹⁶'Gold at Mount Arrowsmith: Report of Private Exploring Expedition', *TPP* [LC] 1863, No 50

¹¹⁷'Report of the Government Geologist: Macquarie Harbour', *TPP* [H of A], 1862, No. 26, p. 5

¹¹⁸N Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff: Philosopher Smith and the birth of Tasmanian mining*, Perth, Tas, 2004, for a brief account of Smith's life see R Smith, 'Early Life of James Smith and Discovery of Tin, Mount Bischoff', Smith Papers, NS 234/14/3 AOT; for a different view of Smith, see S Bennett (ed) 'A Home in the Colonies: Edward Braddon's Letter to India from North-West Tasmania 1878', *PPTHRA* Vol 27(4), 1980, pp. 119-216

¹¹⁹*Tasmanian Mail* 4 August 1877

adaptation of English comparisons. Exemplifying this was artist-writer Louisa Ann Meredith's effusion of mountain glory on sighting Ben Lomond:

I involuntarily uttered a cry of astonishment and delight: — beyond a sort of promontory, in which one hilly range abruptly ended, had arisen, as if by enchantment, a living picture of the snowy Alps! a distant lofty expanse of crag, and battlement, and peak, all white and dazzling in silvery snow, amidst which the steep sides of some mighty buttress-like rocks showed black as jet, and the deep blue unclouded sky crowned this glorious scene; which I suppose, was yet the more charming to me as being wholly unexpected, ¹²⁰

Of the many accounts of landscape those of Calder have relevance because, apart from McKay and later Sprent, he had more varied views of The Reserve than any other person.¹²¹ His views oscillated between mountain glory and mountain gloom throughout his numerous travels. On the Franklin expedition, his view from Fatigue Hill expressed mountain glory:

The long-well defined and serried outline of these beautiful mountains ... in beauty or grandeur are not exceeded by anything that even the western portions of Van Diemen's Land presents.¹²²

Later came a reaction:

People may write as much and as long as they like in praise of mountains and mountain scenery, but well would it be for Tasmania were she unable to boast of so many of these ever-recurring objects of unprofitable sublimity and useless grandeur, which will for ever operate against the occupation of the extensive districts they cover, ¹²³

Calder's picturesque was Arcadian pastoral, and pragmatic. In the absence of human activity in the vast western wilderness of the west, he lamented that 'Such a scene of utter lifelessness and desolation' was unique to Tasmania.¹²⁴ These expressions were not simply those of a curmudgeon. Calder perceived the impact

¹²⁰L Meredith, *My home in Tasmania during a residence of Nine Years*, 2 Vols, London 1852, (facs edit) Swansea, Tas 2003, Vol 2, pp. 102-3

¹²¹For a catalogue of Calder's explorations to 1857 see Abstract pp. 8-10 in 'Correspondence relative to the appointment of Mr Sprent to the Head of the Survey Department', *TPP* [LC] 1857, No. 25

¹²²Calder, 'Some account of the country lying between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', p. 426

¹²³J Calder, *Topographical Sketches of Tasmania 1845 and 1847 From Deloraine to Ennu Bay; and to the Great Lake and Nineteen Lagoons*, Adelaide, 1987, pp. 51-2

¹²⁴Calder, *Recollections of the Franklins in Tasmania*, p. 62

of weather on landscape appreciation contrasting 'that elasticity and exultation of spirit which a visit to new and agreeable scenes in fine weather never fails to impart to us' with the 'dark and dreary looking pines of this elevated region [ie west of Nineteen Lagoons]' which he likened to a Nova Zembla. Several weeks of deep continuous snow contributed to this view.¹²⁵ Other influences on his outlook may have been the nature of the country to be traversed and personal relationships within the Survey Department. There were subtleties of aesthetic appreciation such as appreciation of ravines 'where wildness is unassociated with sublimity'. As well there was beauty in features such as

the serrated ridge, the naked rock, or the dreary wilderness, objects more often sublime in their vastness, than in either the symmetry of their outline or in the associations that naturally connect themselves with them.¹²⁶

Further study of Calder's views reveal apparent contradictions which can best be comprehended if it is remembered that rationality alone does not govern human actions.

Scientists

By the time Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki, the Polish Count, reached the colony in mid-1840 he was a knowledgeable in botany and geology and a competent bushman. Probably he was the first to see both the northern and southern Reserve from the VDL Company road and from Calder's newly marked track respectively.¹²⁷ He recorded altitudes, subsequently found to be erroneous, of crossings of the Mersey and Forth, Gads Hill, Cradle Mt, Barn Bluff, Middlesex Plains and Vale of Belvoir on his second expedition and Marlborough, sources of the Nive, Government Hut Traveller's River and Lake St Clair on his third

¹²⁵Calder, *Topographical Sketches*, pp. 65 & 74

¹²⁶Calder, *Topographical Sketches*, pp. 58 & 67

¹²⁷L Paszkowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki: reflections on his life*, Kew, Victoria, 1997, p. 145

journey.¹²⁸ In commenting on greenstone (nowadays termed dolerite) localities Strzelecki refers to Cradle Mt, Barn Bluff and Eldon Range which if indeed he visited dramatically extends the geographic range of his investigations.¹²⁹ A biographer, Lech Paskowski, asserted without supporting evidence that the Pole's 'line of examination [extended] from the Upper Derwent towards Mount Ossa' and claimed that he named Olympus, Mt Arrowsmith, which name was cartographically transposed westward to Fatigue Hill.¹³⁰ If correct, the former claim identifies the first northward journey from St Clair. Strzelecki's large geological map, *Carte Geologique*, was much reduced for publication.¹³¹ Unfortunately for historians, his travel diaries, *Mon Journal*, were destroyed after his death at his own wishes.¹³² His *Physical Description of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, was, as Lady Franklin indicated, 'a work of pure science which however it may elevate the character of the book will restrict its sales'.¹³³ 'The Count's Tree' on the Cradle Road, Middlesex in which it was claimed that Strzelecki sheltered in bad weather¹³⁴ has passed into contemporary folklore.

¹²⁸For outline of expeditions see letter to James Macarthur, 22 May 1841 in Paszkowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki*, pp. 145-6; for altitudes see 'Notes of an Excursion in the North-Western Part of Tasmania', *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, Vol 1, 1842, pp. 76-78 & 147-9 & P. Strzelecki, *Physical Description of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, London, 1845, pp. 44-6

¹²⁹Strzelecki, *Physical Description*, pp. 103 & 105

¹³⁰Paskowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki*, p. 148 claims he visited Barn Bluff, Cradle Mt and Vale of Belvoir from Marlborough whereas if he did climb the two mountains, it would almost certainly have been from the north in 1841; for a hagiography see G Rawson, *The Count A Life of Sir Paul Edmund Strzelecki, KCMG Explorer and Scientist*, Melbourne, 1953 and for a vituperative account H Heney, *In a Dark Glass The Story of Paul Edmond Strzelecki*, Sydney, 1961

¹³¹Strzelecki, *Physical Description*, pp. 54-5; Paszkowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki*, p. 213, Heney, *In a Dark Glass*, pp. 132-4 & 136, the map was 25' long by 5' wide with a scale, 1/4 to a mile

¹³²Paszkowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki*, p. 214 claims that *Mon Journal*, consulted by a Judge in 1877, probably resided in London Court of Appeals,

¹³³Lady Franklin to Mrs Simpkinson, 5 September 1842, pp. 52-60 in G Mackaness (ed) *Some Private Correspondence of Sir John and Lady Jane Franklin (Tasmania, 1837-1845)*, p. 57; Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 87 Cockburn concurred, claiming it was an 'excellent, but horribly dry book'

¹³⁴*Walkabout*, June 1936, p. 64. James Smith believed this tree to be near the Leven River, *Examiner* 15 August 1887, thanks to N haygarth

Unlike previous expeditions governed by the pragmatic, practical and utilitarian, Strzelecki's was the first genuinely scientific inspired journey. Lawyer, geologist and politician, Dr Arndell Neil Lewis, himself a minor participant in The Reserve's history, in 1939 asserted that

Strzelecki was first to publish a systematic account of any scientific studies in Tasmania. ... [His work] was the most important work on geography and geology until superseded by RM Johnston's *Geology* published in 1888.¹³⁵

His descriptions of localities or geological observations were accurate whereas his conclusions and hypotheses have been superseded by subsequent work. This was largely because of the self-taught geologist's reliance on the now discredited Werner system, which asserted that basalt was the precipitate from water in contrast to Hutton who saw heat as cause of basalt.¹³⁶ For future scientists Strzelecki's observations were known and often used as a reference point, while his contributions to the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* ensured that contemporaries were aware of significant topographic features of the Reserve. This awareness spread to the British scientific world through favourable reviews in many papers and journals, such as *Journal of Royal Geographical Society* and *The Times*, an extract from the latter being reprinted locally.¹³⁷ Details about altitude reached the general reading public when the *Launceston Advertiser* and *Van Diemen's Land Chronicle* printed his table of heights, but probably more attention was given to his views on practical issues such as coal analyses, prospects for irrigation and improvements in agriculture and pastoral practices.¹³⁸

¹³⁵D Gregg, 'Arndell Neil Lewis', *ADB* Vol 11, pp. 85-6 & his assessment of Strzelecki in WL Havard, 'Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol 26, 1940, pp. 76-8

¹³⁶Heney, *In a Dark Glass*, p. 41

¹³⁷Paszkowski, *Sir Paul Edmund de Strzelecki*, pp. 207-9 and *Examiner* 7 February 1846

¹³⁸*VDL Chronicle & Launceston Advertiser* 5 August 1841 & for irrigation 14 October 1841

An active botanist who was unable to accompany the Franklin expedition because of a broken leg, Ronald Campbell Gunn¹³⁹ might previously have been a viewer from afar. In the 1833 summer, his party returned from the Mersey via Western Tiers to Meander Falls, one of the 'grander sights ever beheld'.¹⁴⁰ From high points on the Tiers they had panoramic westward views, including The Reserve and the Frenchman. They found that fellow collector Richard H Davies, brother of Rev. RR Davies, later Rural Dean and Archdeacon, had preceded them.¹⁴¹ In February 1837 while Police Magistrate at Circular Head, Gunn and fellow botanists Dr Joseph Milligan, Surgeon for the VDL Company at Surrey Hills, and Mrs Charlotte Smith, wife of Circular Head storekeeper, roamed between Black Bluff and Middlesex Plains searching for and collecting plants.¹⁴² All were potential viewers of peaks but whether their attention for the botanic precluded the panoramic is unknown. It is unclear if specimens from Barn Bluff resulted from these forays or from Milligan's other efforts.¹⁴³

Gunn made several expeditions to St Clair: the summer of 1841, 1845¹⁴⁴ and 1847.¹⁴⁵ By 1843 Gunn decided that while others extolled the beauty of the Plateau lakes, St Clair was far more beautiful, a judgment in accord with today's

¹³⁹For biographical details see J Reynolds, 'Some Tasmanian Naturalists: Ronald Campbell Gunn', *The Tasmanian Naturalist New Series*, Vol 1, No V, April 1926, pp. 13-14 & TE Burns & JR Skemp, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn', *ADB* Vol 1, pp. 492-3

¹⁴⁰He was accompanied by Henry Douglas and George Moran, Mitchel Library A 316, pp. 20-26 & p 35 *Early Deloraine*, p. 35; for Moran, see AM Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn (1808-1881)', pp. 179-192 in PS Short (ed) *History of systematic botany in Australasia*, South Yarra, 1990, p. 191

¹⁴¹For Richard Henry Davies see Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn', p. 190 & Wayn Index (AOT) which notes a varied career after arriving in the colony in 1831. His CV included former Royal Navy Marine, member of Royal Society, commander of the *Shamrock* taking Aborigines to Flinders Island, and was 'well versed in scientific lore, ... and a close observer of all forms of animal and vegetable life'. Fenton, *Bush Life* pp. 78-9. .

¹⁴²For biographical details of Milligan see WG Hoddinott, 'Joseph Milligan', *ADB* Vol 2, pp. 230-1, Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn', p. 180

¹⁴³Mitchell Library A 316, p. 186

¹⁴⁴TE Burns & JR Skemp, *Van Diemen's Land Correspondents*, Launceston, 1961, p. 109 & Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn', p. 180

¹⁴⁵Species collected can be found in Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn', pp. 185,187 & 188

taste.¹⁴⁶ The last-mentioned trip has greater historical salience because details were published in the influential *London Journal of Botany*. The account, a letter to Hooker, is part scientific report giving for instance precise time of thermometer readings. It conveys a sense of excitement in joys of observation and discovery such as a 'bare heap of rocks wildly thrown together'¹⁴⁷ and curiosity at the old growth presumably 'at least fifty years' which sheathed a *Richea pandanifolia* trunk.¹⁴⁸ Hopes are palpable: investigating where the Derwent discharged from the Lake, he 'picked up a dozen or two other things, but very little new, compared to what I expected; and there was no use loading myself with well-known plants.'¹⁴⁹

Hints of the travelogue and the exotic are intermixed throughout. Laden with small tent, opossum skin rugs and two days' provisions, Gunn's party¹⁵⁰ rowed to the foot of Olympus before clambering through precipitous cliffs and thickets of tangle foot, *Fagus cunninghamii*, to the summit. Gunn had intended climbing adjacent summits to 'discover some novelties at an altitude which can hardly be less than 5500 ft.', but this was his only peak bagging.¹⁵¹ He hoped that some specimens would be interesting as he had carried them on his 'back in a knapsack over a rugged country for about 150 miles and then sending them by sea 15,000'.¹⁵² The wish was granted: amongst 'his own immense collection of living plants from Lake St Clair' was a new Mt Olympus Fagus, (now the deciduous beech), *Cheesemanian radicata* (Fern) and *Epilobium tasmanicum*.¹⁵³ Local botanist, Dr A Buchanan asserts that these specimens were the first collections of the flora of Tasmania's

¹⁴⁶RC Gunn, 'Algae of Tasmania', *Journal of Natural Science*, Vol III, 1844, p. 492

¹⁴⁷RC Gunn, 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus, in Van Diemen's Land', *London Journal of Botany*, Vol 6, 1847, pp 482-487 at p. 484

¹⁴⁸Gunn, 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus,' p. 486

¹⁴⁹Gunn, 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus,' p. 486

¹⁵⁰The party included his brother-in-law, John Jamieson, B Brooks his cousin and two assigned convicts

¹⁵¹Burns & Skemp, *Van Diemen's Land Correspondents*, p. 116

¹⁵²Burns & Skemp, *Van Diemen's Land Correspondents*, p. 114

¹⁵³Burns & Skemp, *Van Diemen's Land Correspondents*, p. 117, deciduous beech or *Nothofagus gunnii*

central high mountains.¹⁵⁴ Collecting and observing was cut short when the summit was enveloped by thick cloud accompanied by rain. Danger was everpresent in the descent through basaltic cliffs: the outer edges having deep chasms between each prism 'which it was unsafe to leap over; as a fall could have been certain death'.¹⁵⁵ Gunn pondered the physical structure concluding that it was 'an extraordinary mountain and a geological puzzle, from the circumstance of all this basalt seeming to overlay the sandstone rock in horizontal strata of vast thickness'.¹⁵⁶

Although Gunn's findings were disseminated locally through the Royal Society and the wider world of botany, especially that centred on the Hookers, William and son Joseph, of Kew Gardens. The latter's visit to Van Diemen's Land in 1840¹⁵⁷ was mutually beneficial. For the Englishman it provided information and specimens, some from a trip to Marlborough with Gunn, while the adopted Van Demonian gained public recognition from the international botanic world through Hooker's *Flora Tasmaniae* and publication in the *Journal of Natural Science*. Gunn's trip to Olympus came at a time when the fashion for exotic Antipodean collections was waning. Hooker encapsulated this by writing that

The Flora of Australia has been justly regarded as the most remarkable that is known, owing to the number of peculiar forms of vegetation which that continent presents ... differing fundamentally, or in almost all of its attributes, from those of other lands¹⁵⁸

Hooker's encomium

There are few Tasmanian plants that Mr Gunn has not seen alive, noted their habits in a living state, and collected large suites of specimens with singular tact and judgment ... [which were] transmitted to England in perfect

¹⁵⁴Buchanan, 'Ronald Campbell Gunn, p. 188

¹⁵⁵Gunn, 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus,' p. 485

¹⁵⁶Gunn, 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus,' p. 485

¹⁵⁷S Jack, 'Joseph Dalton Hooker', pp. 73-84 in J Dargavel, D Gaughwin & B Libbis (eds) *Australia's Ever-changing Forests V*, Canberra, 2002,

¹⁵⁸JD Hooker, *The botany of the Arctic Voyage of HM Discovery ships Erebus and Terror, in the Years 1839-43 ...* Vol 3, *Flora Tasmaniae*, London, 1844-60 Introductory essay Introd p xxvii

preservation, and ... accompanied with notes that display remarkable powers of observation, and a facility for seizing important characters in the physiognomy of plants, such as few experienced botanists possess¹⁵⁹

encapsulated Gunn's botanical career

Others were inspired or influenced by the new glamour science, geology. Calder found the fossil, *Spirifer stolesii*, along the Nive as well as near Lake Dixon.¹⁶⁰ He observed that the prevailing stone was greenstone or 'non-stone as it is most usually called, which includes every variety of trapp and basalt'. Mountains as far west as, and including, King William's, were thus composed, while west of the Derwent, Calder noted increasing signs of western Tasmania's dominant rock, quartzite. Royal Society papers bear testimony to the scientific spirit of the age with many references to flora and fauna and geology. Collecting fossils was seemingly a desired attribute among the educated and well-to-do with some despatching collections overseas, usually to the British Museum.¹⁶¹

Equestrians, Pedestrians and Artists

After arriving in 1844, watercolorist John Skinner Prout, conveyed new techniques through Hobart exhibitions and lectures.¹⁶² Prout was transformed from being a 'humble practitioner of topography in England ... [to colonial] prophet of taste in the visual arts.¹⁶³ In February 1845 he, Colonial Treasurer Fraser, (Fritz) and nephew of Lady Jane Franklin, Simpkinson de Wesselow, (Selim) travelled to Lake St Clair. The catalyst for 'tour in search of the picturesque' were Frankland's sketches which

¹⁵⁹Hooker, *The botany of the Arctic Voyage ...* Vol 3, Flora Tasmaniae Introductory essay p. cxxv

¹⁶⁰JE Calder, Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and Frenchman's Cap', *HTC* 21 September 1850

¹⁶¹Meredith, *My Home in Tasmania*, Vol 1, p. 51 mentions the Richmond Police Magistrate who planned to send his collection there

¹⁶²AV Brown & B Chapman, 'Art exhibitions in Tasmania during the nineteenth century - a chronology', *The Art Bulletin of Tasmania* 1986, pp. 44-5 & AV Brown, 'John Skinner Prout- his Tasmanian sojourn, 1844-48', pp. 21-31 in *The Art Bulletin of Tasmania*, 1984, p. 24

¹⁶³B Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, Sydney, 1987, p. 298

revealed glimpses of 'scenery full of natural grandeur, of unchecked wildness, and savage majesty'.¹⁶⁴ In their riverside tent they were entertained by 'Government Men' — Brown, Bill and Giles — relating a version of Alexander Pearce's escape from Macquarie Harbour. Lost horses and attacks by March-flies, resembling the 'common English horse-fly', were associated travails.¹⁶⁵ Not all panoramas were mountain glory. Almost shut in by mountains, a scene 'would have been one of forbidding sternness and of gloomy grandeur' but for lakeside vegetation which 'softened the tone of the landscape, and gave it a picturesqueness that soothed the senses even while imagination was excited to the utmost by the influence of natural beauty'.¹⁶⁶ In the lulls between rain squalls, they engaged in fishing, sketching and boating.

The weather influenced their appreciation of the scenery which ranged from one of desolation to 'one of singular beauty'.¹⁶⁷ Following an afternoon storm, Prout enthused that it was 'a land of beauty such as the painter sees in his dreams and the poet sings in his verse'.¹⁶⁸ Then he rhapsodised about establishing a new society. They marvelled at the 'craggy fissures of Barren Bluff' a distant mountain range,¹⁶⁹ and the rocks on Frankland Beach. They discovered remains of a tent from Frankland's expedition near the Narcissus Plains, and met Gunn's botanising party near the Derwent outlet. On returning to Marlborough they heard of their demise through drowning! Possibly the works of all three men were exhibited at the

¹⁶⁴'The Sketcher in Tasmania', pp. 275-80 in *Once a Week*, 1 March 1852, p. 275. *PPRST* 1900-01, p. x. De Wesselow sent a letter and water colour sketches from the expedition. He wrote 'Lake St Clair was but little known, and our party explored it, sending up a boat from Hobart through the bush for the purpose.'

¹⁶⁵'The Sketcher in Tasmania', pp. 304-308 in *Once a Week*, 8 March 1852, p. 304

¹⁶⁶'The Sketcher in Tasmania', 8 March 1852, p. 304

¹⁶⁷'The Sketcher in Tasmania', 8 March 1852, pp. 305-6

¹⁶⁸'The Sketcher in Tasmania', 8 March 1852, p. 306. Among his sketches in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery is 'Mt Ida, Lake St Clair' in Brown, 'John Skinner Prout- his Tasmanian sojourn, p. 29

¹⁶⁹'The Sketcher in Tasmania', 8 March 1852, p. 306. The new societies were 'a new Icaria, a new Blithedale, or a new Harmony', while the distant mountain range was probably the Du Canes

famous May-July 1846 art exhibition in Hobart. More certainly there account gained widespread currency in Establishment circles.¹⁷⁰ Some however found his championing of the right to interpret rather than reproduce the landscape somewhat challenging.¹⁷¹

In 1853-54 Captain H Butler Stoney, 99th Regiment, made two trips, equestrian and pedestrian, to the St Clair area. On the former, Olympus which beckoned initially from Clyde Hill gradually dominated the skyline westward from Marlborough. The approach through desolate country enhanced the beauty of the lake where crystalline reflections of Olympus and the Seven Apostles, were 'grand in their majesty'. On the outward journey, the party travelled along the government road, while the return trip was along a shorter private track, from Gellibrand's estate, *Cleveland*.

Subsequently, Stoney accompanied by his servant, Bullock, and Charles Forster, brother of Hamilton Police Magistrate John, headed westward from Gellibrand's towards the Gordon before heading northwards to the Guelph River and St Clair. Stoney's selections from Forster's diary indicated an eye for the exotic that would appeal to foreign readers. Thus there were nights sleeping in a fire-hollowed tree trunk, log crossings of rivers, and navigating through dense vegetation by compass. Thick scrub and a series of hills and valleys so 'thoroughly disheartened' the duo that they wished they 'had never heard of the 'new country.'¹⁷² Adding to dilemmas, they found a major error on Frankland's chart.¹⁷³ There was temporary respite when they reached a bridge over the Derwent and the track to the New Country. Then they temporarily lost the track east and were reduced to sparse rations. Fortuitously, they met Ben the shepherd who was 'as glad as "fifty pound"'

¹⁷⁰Brown & Chapman, 'Art exhibitions in Tasmania during the nineteenth century', p. 45

¹⁷¹Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, pp. 299-300

¹⁷²Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, p. 203

¹⁷³The Gordon flowed from the south west instead of north-south

about having met them and at his hut they relished the 'nicest piece of white bread and a pat of fresh butter' after having been on short rations for several days. In gratitude Butler Stoney rewarded Ben with his opossum skin rug and frying pan. From another shepherd's hut, Stoney rode to Constable Lascelles' hut at Marlborough, only to discover him absent, carting supplies to a survey party. The journey was quick because

altho' the country is very rough and covered in sharp rocks, the horses bred in this part are so active and so well accustomed to it that you may ride at full gallop with very little more danger of a summersault than with an English horse over an English park.¹⁷⁴

If earlier the pair displayed scientific curiosity, collecting rock samples and botanical specimens, later motives were more utilitarian, with Forster visiting his pastoral run.

In travelling the old VDL Company road to Circular Head, Stoney commented that Middlesex Plains were superior to Emu Plains, a low lying plain adjacent to Gads Hill. Surprisingly for one who avowed that 'lovers of the sublime ... [would enjoy a] wander in the primeval glades of trackless forests', Stoney failed to mention Cradle Mt or Barn Bluff in his personal description.¹⁷⁵ He did, however, include James Sprent's observations outlined earlier in this chapter.

Contemporaneously, FJ Cockburn arrived in the Antipodes to regain his health. In the course of his travels through the island in 1854 he decided to see St Clair which he had been told 'was a gem in its way'. His timing was awry as his trip coincided with the onset of winter.¹⁷⁶ Marlborough was the

Ultima Thule of civilization in this direction; beyond it forks are few and far between, and the few inhabitants there are, live in a delightful Robinson Crusoe state of doubt as to whether today be Monday or Friday.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, p. 219

¹⁷⁵Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, p. 286 for the sublime & p. 288 for his description of Middlesex and Hounslow Heath

¹⁷⁶Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 75

¹⁷⁷Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 74

Between here and St Clair Cockburn and his guide, an Irish convict constable, met shepherds and his perceptions of their lifestyle are contained in Chapter 6. Finally, at St Clair Cockburn lamented the absence of a boat which would have facilitated views of the Lake which he compared to a Scottish loch. The Lake was

a wild and striking scene: the deceptively blue sky overhead, — the pure snow on the lofty mountains, — the sombre forest, — the rocky crags, — the rushing river and the wintry-looking, wind-swept waters, which dashed fretfully in little waves upon the beach¹⁷⁸

Despite the distance, 110 miles from Hobart, and the lack of other attractions, Cockburn was pleased he had made the effort. The Lake's 'wild and rugged beauty' was greater than anticipated, the walking was pleasant and he enjoyed being alone.¹⁷⁹

Morton Allport's January 1863 trip was highly significant in publicising Lake St Clair.¹⁸⁰ While Allport¹⁸¹ had previously visited the Lake with brother Curzon in 1861 the remainder of the 'caravan', had limited bush experience.¹⁸² Also significant is that this account can be regarded as the impressions of a native, Allport having arrived in the colony as a 12 month-old baby. Their venture elicited derision from some including William Dean of *Belmont* who found it incomprehensible that they would take 'so much trouble to make ... [themselves] uncomfortable'. There were numerous travails — an appalling road, some snow and wind squalls and strong winds, a risky creek crossing and extremely muddy conditions across the

¹⁷⁸Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 78

¹⁷⁹Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 78

¹⁸⁰Unless otherwise stated all information is derived from Morton Allport, 'An account of our late trip to Lake St Clair', to Curzon Allport, March 1863, Excursion to Lake St Clair, MS Box 11, Folder 7, Allport Library

¹⁸¹For biographical details see GT Stilwell, 'Morton Allport', *ADB* Vol 3, pp. 28-9

¹⁸²The caravan included Allport's wife Lizzie (Elizabeth), Mr & Mrs John Butler, Miss Wilmot and her cousin Miss Bell, Rev John Buckland, first headmaster of Hutchins School, and Frederick Packer. For biographical details of Buckland see EM Dollery, John Richard Buckland', *ADB* Vol 3, pp. 287-8

Navarre Plains which the party bore with equanimity. Allport commended their 'determination ... to make light of all difficulties, and at the appreciation of anything worth seeing in our various excursions'. He lauded Buckland, stating he was at home in each capacity — 'sailor, blacksmith, groom, cook, waiter, butcher, carpenter, tailor, shoemaker or Ladies Man' and that he would 'never go on a trip in Tasmania without him.'

Not the least among the manifold attractions was Boviak Beach, now Cynthia Bay. Like Butler Stoney the party, especially ladies, were entranced by the beach. Allport commented on the extraordinary sight of women on knees examining and collecting from rows of small pebbles running parallel to water's edge. The combination of white quartz, all shades of amber from white to colourless to yellow and red, green, jet black and gray produced a kaleidoscopic effect. On their excursion on the Lake, Allport feared he would 'be unable to give you [ie Curzon] even a faint impression of the wondrous beauty of the scenery'. So perfect were reflections that it 'seemed a pity to dip the oars into it and spoil' them. More captivating was the flora. They delighted in individual species: a beautiful *Eucryphia billardiere* 50' high 'with blossoms like those of a sweet briar but of rather a paler pink & shedding a delicate perfume which was perceptible on the Lake' and for the first time a gigantic pandani which 'I can hardly tell you how much it added to the beauty of the woods'. They wondered at the cumulative effect of the whole with the precipitous eastern slopes of Olympus 'enveloped in a dense mass of foliage more resembling a tropical forest than a "Tasmanian bush"'. Mountain panoramas were impressive with Ida and Byron 'all noble mountains'.

For future scientists, description of lacustrine features, such as a small island at foot of Lake and a reef offshore from Cynthia Bay, submerged in the 1930s by the HEC impoundment, are invaluable. Also helpful are descriptions of equipment, clothing,

language and attitudes for social historians. The common Bush tea kettle, 'known in our old excursion as a 'Tin Billy' ' was renamed 'Fiery Furnace' in deference to ladies who did not approve of slang. The ladies' tent was the 'magpies nest' because of the 'everlasting chatter' emanating from it. Allport expressed surprise at Miss Best's capabilities declaring that she could 'give Packer 100 in a mile and beat him out of sight in rowing' and was very capable with an American axe. He described some camping practices which lasted until the advent of solid foam and inflatable mattresses in the 1970s. Atop their mattresses of boughs was a large opossum rug under and on top of each person while pillows consisted of rolled-up clothes. The ladies did not have adequate clothing so Allport's spares were worn on the excursion to Arrowsmith. Miss Wilmot wore his boots, Miss Best his second wideawake, Mrs Butler was attired in his pea jacket, with Lizzie the 'only one well prepared and looked as if she'd just left home'. Allport claimed that on his previous trip he 'determined never to be caught in open swamp without a compass', while this excursion taught him never to travel in western country without a barometer.

Allport's insights into pastoral practices will be described in Chapter 6. Contemporary attitudes, both individual and general, to shooting and fishing are revealed. The hunting of a variety of birds, — ducks, green parrots and doves— and kangaroo could sit alongside a sensitivity to nature. Befitting a future salmon commissioner, Allport asserted that parts of the Derwent were 'splendidly adapted for the King of fish with spawning beds enough for millions'.

Details of Allport's wilderness photographs, first certainly in Tasmania and perhaps in Australia, are salient. Gillian Winter claims they were 'the first true wilderness photographs'¹⁸³ and used the new 'dry-plate collodion process' which extended the

¹⁸³G Winter, 'Morton Allport's photographs of Lake St Clair, 1863' pp. 56-58 in *40° South* No 17, p. 56

Figure 14: Morton Allport's photos, Lake St Clair, 1863

No 4



"Boviak" Beach.

(a) No 4 "Boviak" Beach

No 6



Camp, Lake St Clair.

(b) No 6 'Camp, Lake St Clair'

sensitive period for negatives from minutes with the wet plate process to days. The path to photographic perfection was difficult. In taking one photograph Allport's face was covered with five march flies on one side of his face and mosquitos on the other, while leeches attached themselves to his legs. For some shots Allport had to stand camera legs in the water. There were panoramas of mountains, close-ups of lakeside vegetation, and various aspects of camp life such as tents and the kitchen. His artistic training is evident in the framing and composition of photographs. To avoid jolting by horses, Buckland and Allport carried plates, covered in black velvet, a dozen together and wedged into a box, and camera.

The party's attitudes to guides reveal class interaction between a Hobart upper class and remote rural working class. Throughout there is a hint of condescension. Stocks who 'hitherto [had] proved a sulky rascal but was now improving' accompanied them from his cottage at Mt Charles to a boat about a mile from the mouth of the Derwent. His stocks rose after nearly drowning in an attempt to deliver a forgotten frying pan. Stock's recovery was rapid as a 'glass of grog soon put him straight'. At Lake Dixon, new guide Jones unsuccessfully attempted to douse their ardour about walking to the mining camp, claiming it was 'impossible for ladies to reach Mt Arrowsmith because of late rains and barely possible for gents'.

Approaching from the New Country provided the normal opportunities of viewing the mountains. More unusual were two nights camping which permitted a leisurely exploration of the Lake and the early reaches of the Derwent. While others had viewed from the west, none had taken photos nor left such detailed personal impressions. Undoubtedly word of mouth spread via the 'magpie ne(s)twork' and through upper echelons of Hobart society. The Hobart Art treasures exhibition of

March 1863 spread the news of this remote and somewhat exotic destination to a much larger audience,

Conclusion: the situation around 1870

Walch's Tasmanian Guide Book of 1871 provides an appropriate conclusion. It noted pastoralism in areas adjacent to the northern and within southern boundaries but dismissed over-optimistic hopes for the unsettled lands of the West: 'after repeated trials, [the plains] were found unfit for pasturage.'¹⁸⁴ Tourists had reached Lake St Clair, 'much admired for its scenery by the few ... who have visited it'.¹⁸⁵ However, the tourism infrastructure was primitive. There was a road, albeit rough and rocky,¹⁸⁶ from New Norfolk via Hamilton, Ouse Bridge and Marlborough to the Lake and sometimes local guides were required;¹⁸⁷ chaise carts were available for hire and some inns or hostelries, such as the Ouse Bridge Inn and Mrs Stocks' establishment at Victoria Valley or Mrs Jenkins at the Dee provided accommodation and meals. Yet at the Lake there was not always a boat, a necessity to appreciate the surrounding beauty. In contrast Cradle Mt did not appear on the tourism horizon, remaining the province of surveyors, prospectors and piners, and perhaps one of Bill Field's stockmen. Coaches took tourists, mainly anglers, to the Lakes after trout had been introduced successfully in 1864.

An appreciation of native flora and fauna precedes or is contemporaneous with similar feelings for wild places. Some, native-born and new arrival, admired native

¹⁸⁴LA Meredith (ed) *Walch's Tasmanian Guide Book: A handbook of information about all parts of the colony*, Hobart, 1871, p. 118

¹⁸⁵*Walch's Tasmanian Guide Book*, p. 26

¹⁸⁶For Morton Allport's party in 1863 it was a choice between incessant jolting as they avoided or passed over innumerable greenstone boulders or being bogged in the many swamps. Tully's party's westward advance was delayed by a 'very bad road [of] large greenstone boulders [which] lay as thick as paving stones', and overlaid bullock drays. Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold'

¹⁸⁷Both Butler Stoney and Cockburn required a guide in 1854 Cockburn described how for the last 6 miles as a track often lost in tussocky grass, and the skipping from tussock to tussock to avoid the wet holes between would have been amusing to a spectator but it was decidedly unpleasant to us. Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 76

flora and introduced species as evidenced by composition of gardens. Similarly, observations of fauna became less preoccupied with the exotic and more concerned with its place in the overall landscape. Louisa Meredith's *My Home in Tasmania* exemplifies both with numerous references to all aspects of the natural world.¹⁸⁸ Wild places such as lakes, caves — Oakden's at Mole Creek, and waterfalls such as Meander and Snug — continued to be appreciated by a small but influential group drawn from professions, pastoralists and merchants. Mountains were much admired for their sublimity and picturesqueness with Meredith labelling Wellington as a 'crowning glory of the landscape'. In contrast mountain gloom depicted high places as dangerous. Thus the use of experienced guides was encouraged, even on Mt Wellington.¹⁸⁹ There was a growing pride in the Tasmanian scenery. On a return to his homeland, a fine arts patron expressed his disappointment with the lake scenery of England, avowing that 'After viewing the rugged mountains of Tasmania and the magnificent reaches of some of its rivers, everything here seems tame and even paltry.'¹⁹⁰ Men predominated but women were numerically significant. As indicated, gazers from afar outnumbered those close up. Aesthetic appreciation was either absent or inchoate among those with opportunities for frequent visits and or sightings, notably stockmen, shepherds and prospectors. Most numerous, yet physically remote, were the armchair visitors who via survey reports, travellers' accounts, scientific journals and newspaper references to gubernatorial visits, who had a mental map of the future Reserve. Furthermore the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, which emanated from the Tasmanian Society and the Royal Society, provided forums for dissemination and discussion of such matters.¹⁹¹ Their considerable knowledge and vicarious enjoyment probably was heightened by

¹⁸⁸Meredith, *My Home in Tasmania*, Vol 1 pp. 124-5 for a 'most singular and beautiful lichen', pp. 133-4 for the beauty of the abalone shell, or Venus's ear & Ch XIV for 'indigenous animals', Vol 2 for native flowers pp. 68-78

¹⁸⁹Walch's *Tasmanian Guide Book*, p. 53

¹⁹⁰*Examiner* 21 November 1861

¹⁹¹Rev J Lillie, 'Introduction', *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science*, Vol 1, 1842, pp. 1-13

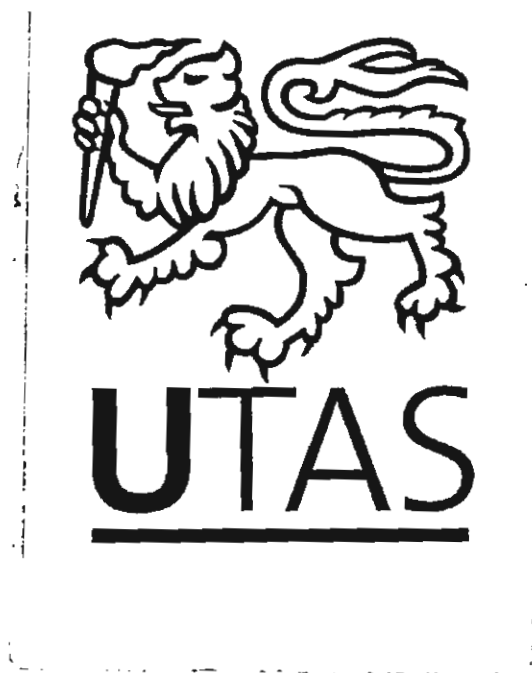
artistic exhibitions, notably Prout and de Wesselow, and Morton Allport's photographs. Knowledge spread internationally, especially to botanical circles in England where scientific journals carried accounts of flora, especially the new and exotic, and collecting expeditions such as that by Gunn. Sir WJ Hooker's assertion that 'Mr Gunn's name is familiar to our readers as a most active and intelligent botanist of Van Diemen's Land; but the extent of his discoveries in that interesting country cannot be fully appreciated till the catalogue of new species shall appear in this Journal' illustrates this.¹⁹² A similar situation prevailed in geology with the return to England of Sir Paul de Strzelecki and his membership of prestigious organisations and association with influential scientific circles.

Through surveying, there was a detailed topographical knowledge of both northern and southern extremities of The Reserve. Gould had traversed the wilder western boundary before entering the Park to the south of Lake Windemere and heading Cradleward. The immediate environs of St Clair had been studied in much detail with an intimate understanding of the composition of the natural landscape. Europeans had now begun to harness the natural resources of the southern area in a limited way with grazing in the Vale of Cuvier and tourism, albeit limited, to St Clair.

To the chagrin of state governments, payable gold fields had not been discovered. 'Philosopher' Smith's discovery of tin at Mt Bischoff however, opened new possibilities for the entire state. It was not then apparent, however, that this would herald a new age. For optimists, there were signs that inevitable mineral finds would enrich the island and that many would visit The Reserve, even if only as a stepping stone to the west and southwest. In contrast, pessimists saw a continuation of

¹⁹²R Gunn 'Botanical Excursion to Mount Olympus, in Van Diemen's Land', *London Journal of Botany*, Vol 6, 1847 p. 482. Thanks to Dr AM Buchanan for locating and lending me a copy of this article

existing trends with a few tourists, grazing and harvesting of pine being the only profitable activities. 171



CHAPTER FOUR
STEPPING STONE TO THE WEST?
1871 — 1907

For the last 20 years I have always believed that the West Coast would prove our great mine of wealth, only needing time and capital to develop, and it now seems as if this was in measurable distance of accomplishment. It is not merely the amount of wealth, that will be extracted from the district, but the stimulus of hope that the prospect will give, and the increased confidence in the resources of the island, that will tend to lift us out of our present depression, and start us on a new era of prosperity
JB Walker June 5 1893¹

In the decades following the discovery of tin at Mt Bischoff, Tasmania's hopes centred on the west. Fulfilment of the dream of mineral wealth depended on overcoming an array of natural obstacles, — topographical, vegetation and climatic — and human decisions about routes and modes of transport. That is the theme of this chapter. The island's already renowned parochialism made resolution of the problem difficult, if not intractable.² Theoretically the reliable shifting of mineral ores and heavy machinery favoured shipping and the increasingly popular railways. Unfortunately, with the exception of Port Davey which was too distant to be a genuine alternative, the West Coast was devoid of natural harbours. Possible alternatives such as the Pieman River, and harbours — Macquarie, Granville and Trial — all had serious limitations. At the Pieman, successful entry over the Bar was crucial,³ Granville received only minimal support,⁴ while the description of the last-mentioned as 'hole in the rock', encapsulated its limitations: difficult access, limited area, exposed to westerlies and barely five feet of water at low tide.⁵ The safest option, Macquarie Harbour, was beset by problems at Hell's Gates which

¹PB Walker (ed), *Prelude to Federation (1884-1898) Extracts from the journal of James Backhouse Walker*, FRGS, Hobart, 1976, p. 101

²*Tasmanian Mail*, 21 January 1882, encapsulated this: 'antagonistic views and disunion are so essentially Tasmanian, that it would be a marvellous phenomenon to see any community pulling together for the "greatest good for the greatest number"'.

³*Tasmanian Mail*, 7 August and 18 September 1880

⁴For general discussion of West Coast harbours see T Jetson, *"It's a different country down there" a history of droving in Western Tasmania*, Smithton, 2004, pp. 41-2; *Tasmanian Mail*, 22 April & 4 November 1882

⁵For Trial Harbour see *Tasmanian Mail*, 26 March & 17 September 1881; 'Macquarie Harbour and Trial Harbour: Reports by Mr CP Sprent', *TPP [LC]*, 1881, No 96, p. 6

required large sums to eradicate. Although from the early 1880s when fears of a Victorian monopoly of the West Coast trade prompted northern and southern interests to link their region by steamboat to the West,⁶ a reliable overland route was regarded as the best option.

As a result of his explorations between Mt Bischoff and the West Coast, surveyor Sprent proposed tracks — south from Circular Head, west from Surrey Hills and west from Lake St Clair via the Collingwood Valley and King River — to encourage western prospecting.⁷ Only the last two are pertinent to this story because of geographic proximity in the case of the former and pre-existing tracks for the latter. With the addition of a south-west approach and one from the northwest coast, these major recommendations established the context for debate about overland routes for the next thirty years.

Intra-regional debate over variations within this framework was protracted and divisive. Each route had its advocates: members of parliament, local newspapers and businesses, and community groups such as the Launceston and West Coast Direct Route Association. Self-confidence was a feature of the latter as epitomised by the Bischoff Track Association proclaiming that it 'will be established beyond a fact that the route via Bischoff will be the one par excellence'.⁸ Associated issues were the line of demarcation between private enterprise and public spending and by whom it would be determined. Some believed that transport infrastructure should be the preserve of government with all other aspects of mining the province of private enterprise.⁹ Reality was different with private companies building tramways

⁶*Tasmanian Mail*, 3 September 1881 for the example of the Hobartian West Coast Steamboat and Tramway Company of 1881

⁷Mr Sprent's report on the Country Round Mount Bischoff, *TPP* [H of A] 1876, No 42, p. 6 & CP Sprent, 'Explorations in Western Tasmania', *Royal Geographical Society of Australia, Victorian branch proceedings*, Vol 3, 1885, pp. 51-65

⁸*Tasmanian Mail*, 28 June 1879

⁹*Tasmanian Mail*, 9 November 1878 & 12 April 1879

and railways, and government awarding concessions, especially land, as recompense.¹⁰ Further debate stemmed from aspects of parliamentary representation such as notions of government representing the public good. Also salient were national and international economics, which influenced metal prices and capacity to raise funds. Few considered the possible deleterious consequences of borrowing English money to fund railway construction, with most politicians in the early 1870s trying to extract the maximum for their district. Only when the eastern states land boom burst and financial institutions collapsed, and public works went into abeyance and public servants were retrenched, did many realise the precariousness of the colonial position. However, Tasmania's western mining saved the island from the worst severity prevailing on the mainland.¹¹

That tracks, roads and railways were essential to maintain communications with and provide access to mining fields was an article of faith. The oft-quoted corollary that such provision would produce new finds also was unquestioned.¹² Growth of mining towns, with supply of meat a fundamental issue, fuelled demand for new and/or more substantial tracks. The government conundrum, to proceed or await new developments, was not understood; instead it was regarded as ignoring the needs of the west. Advocates of action repeatedly attributed parsimony and indifference to parliamentarians. Some such as JB Walker ascribed government expenditure to baser principles such as 'buying the members' votes by works, either useless or of questionable utility'.¹³ To buttress their arguments, track advocates added possible discovery of pastoral and/or agricultural land, commercial stands of native timber and later, the opening of tourist sites.

¹⁰Jetson, *It's a different country down there*, pp. 35 & 37

¹¹Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, pp. 96-98 & 100

¹²For an example of this see ZDH 14 September 1892. Mt Farrell proved the point with copper ore being discovered in 1894 but remained virtually inaccessible until construction of the Innes Track in 1897, ZDH 23 & 24 May 1900

¹³Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, p. 43

The revival of latent mining fever from the 1870s ushered in a new era. Unlike the 1850s, this boom was underpinned by substance. There were more experienced miners and prospectors with a deeper understanding of the area and some, albeit insufficient, tracks existed. Neither the most imaginative nor the wildest speculator could have predicted the mineral wealth that was to be won from the west over the next thirty years.

There was increased public awareness of The Reserve mainly because of its location athwart potential routes to the mineral rich west. As tracks opened up hitherto inaccessible country, there were signs, perhaps superficial, that The Reserve might be part of an extended western mining bonanza. In narrating and analysing three intra-regional and inter-regional route wars, the following pages locates developments within The Reserve in a chronological framework. With opening-up of the area, more natural resources such as pastures and minerals were uncovered and exploited. There was increased public awareness of these activities and those, such as bushwalkers and photographers, frequenting the area for pleasure. Results of scientific expeditions aided the transformation from stepping stone to an area inherently valuable.

First Route War

With the realisation that Mt Bischoff's tin reserves were extensive and Mt Heemskirk's tin fields and gold north of the Pieman promising, debate began over which town/port would handle the trade to Waratah. The VDL Company combined with the Mt Bischoff Company to upgrade its existing tramway in 1875 and by 1884 there was a railway to Burnie. Potential coastal rivals, notably Table Cape and Leven/Penguin, were vanquished as they faced the additional costs of locating and

constructing routes. The north-west in general, and Burnie in particular, had gained a decisive advantage over its rivals.¹⁴

Our attention centres on routes either directly crossing or venturing towards The Reserve. Exploration and track location, cutting and marking was a combination of government and private enterprise with the former more prominent in southern schemes than elsewhere. Many southern explorations used Lake St Clair or Derwent Bridge as their outpost with their westward advance piggybacking on the accumulated knowledge of their predecessors.

Scottish-born and educated James Reid Scott imbibed surveying practice and theory from his father Thomas, the disgraced colonial surveyor, and uncle James, renowned for his work in north-east Tasmania.¹⁵ In the 1870s he gained practical experience and perhaps private tutoring in landscape appreciation when accompanied by draftsman, artist and photographer William Charles Piquenit on south-west trips.¹⁶ In 1873 Scott's party visited Lake Laura, and then were the first known group to trace the Narcissus upstream for several miles. These were side trips with a St Clair to the Pieman route the major objective. From Cuvier Valley they ascended Coal Hill to view the 'bold and massive spurs of the Eldon Range' and 'the massive heads and peaks of the Du Cane range' and in the distance, Barn Bluff and Cradle.¹⁷ After the expedition, Scott reiterated Sprent's options and suggested a south-west approach along Dawson's Road and a number of minor or cross tracks such as that from Surrey Hills-Knoie Plains south to the St Clair

¹⁴For Mt Bischoff to Burnie, see L Rae, *A history of railways and tramways on Tasmania's West Coast*, Hobart, 1983, pp. 172-175 & generally for links with the west, L Rae, *The Emu Bay Railway*, Hobart, 1997

¹⁵For biographical details see N Smith, 'James Reid Scott', *ADB* Vol 6, pp. 96-7 & GH Crawford, 'Thomas & James Scott', *ADB* Vol 2, pp. 429-30

¹⁶JR Scott, 'Port Davey in 1875', *PPRST*, 1875, pp. 94-104; & for biographical details see 'William Charles Piquenit', *ADB* Vol 5, pp. 444-45

¹⁷WC Piquenit, 'Among the Western Highlands of Tasmania', *Transactions of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science*, Hobart, 1892, p. 9

line.¹⁸ Like Sprent he emphasised the St Clair track, (which followed Burgess' old path, (see Chapter 3) as an escape route when western rivers flooded. Scott believed that burning-off by track cutting parties, which would keep the country open for six or seven years, was as valuable as the tracks.¹⁹

After his untimely death, Scott's name was attached to the westward route. Experienced bushman and near legendary packer James Andrew opposed this, correctly asserting that the sons of New Norfolk medico Dr Moore, TB the doyen of Western explorers, his brother James, as well as himself, preceded Scott by two months along this track in summer of 1877.²⁰ Sprent corroborated and assigned Moore's name to the track on his Western Tasmania map.²¹ Andrew eloquently asserted the privilege of being the first explorer. To some, he suggested, such a notion may appear a

trivial privilege, but which is, nevertheless, one of an inestimable value in an explorer's eyes — that of having his route charted in his own name, and of suggesting to the Government the adoption of such designations as he might select, by right of discovery, for mountains, lakes, or rivers, which were previously undescribed or unknown²²

So in using The Reserve as a stepping stone both groups traversed and had views from the south-western fringe.

¹⁸JR Scott, 'Exploration in the Western Country: Letter of the Hon JR Scott MLC to the Minister of Lands and Works', *TPP* [H of A], 1876, No. 104, p. 10. District and mining surveyor HJ Chalmers proposed a line from near Cradle to the route west from St Clair. Thus the Lake District would have access to Waratah and the north could engage in trade with the Lyell district. 'District Surveyors' Reports', *TPP* [H of A], 1883, No. 57, p. 9, & also reiterated in *Examiner* 18 September 1886

¹⁹JR Scott, 'Exploration in the Western Country', p. 5& also *Cornwall Chronicle* 1 November 1876

²⁰James Andrew, 'Notes in Reference to Scott's Track, via Lake St Clair, to the West Coast of Tasmania', *PPRST*, 1888, pp. 49-52 & *Tasmanian Mail* 1 December 1877 contains details of Scott's trip & Moore's notes on the country. For the Moore expedition see I McShane, 'TB Moore — a bushman of learning', BA Hons (Hist) University of Tasmania, 1982, pp. 75-77

²¹Andrew, 'Notes in Reference to Scott's Track', p. 52 & Sprent, 'Recent Explorations on the West Coast of Tasmania', p. 59

²²Andrew, 'Notes in Reference to Scott's Track', p. 49

Contemporaneously another expedition followed this high level track towards the navigable waters of the Pieman. Despite recurring expenditure on the Marlborough to St Clair road, Edward Albert Counsel,²³ as Calder had done nearly four decades earlier, spent time improving this 'rocky and rough' road.²⁴ From St Clair in 1878 he traversed the Scott-Moore track to the confluence of the Eldons discovering coal specimens near Coal Hill. The return journey was hampered by lack of provisions caused by neglect and wanton vandalism at provision depôts. Despite the weeks in the wild, Counsel and James Moore still found time to visit the northern end of St Clair and, not unexpectedly, described the lake and mountain scenery as 'indeed very grand'.²⁵

Governor Weld's party arrived at St Clair soon after Counsel's departure. Like earlier parties, the party used guides: Mr Ellis from Bronte to Clarence River and then the Reads, Robert of 'Redlands' and John of 'Kinvarra', inspecting their pastoral leases.²⁶ Apparent capriciousness of the weather gods — hailstorms, torrential rain and snow — enhanced landscape appreciation. Weld followed the amateur artist tradition with a 'capital sketch of Mt Ida' and other peaks. When inclement weather thwarted their attempts to explore the lake by boat, the party followed Counsel's new track to the Cuvier Valley.²⁷ With a trip to Waratah via the Middlesex Plains a month earlier,²⁸ Weld had seen more of The Reserve than any of his vice-regal predecessors and understood the difficulties of access for potential tourists. It is

²³A Elias, 'Edward Albert Counsel', *ADB* Vol. 8, pp. 121-122 & for autobiographical details see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, 1900, pp. 142-3

²⁴*Tasmanian Mail* 9 March 1878 & in particular, NS 262/2 'A surveyor's notes on the Marlborough Road': EA Counsel's diary January-May 1878 reveals details of track cutters

²⁵'Mr Surveyor Counsel's Report on Track from Lake St Clair to the Pieman River', *TPP* [H of A], 1878, No. 47, pp. 88 For details of Weld, see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol 1, Hobart, 1900, pp. 49-50

²⁶Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, p. 23 for details of Weld's Private Secretary St Hill who embezzled £1300 from his Governor. For the Reads, see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, 1900, pp. 425-6

²⁷*Tasmanian Mail* 9 March 1878

²⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 2 February 1878

difficult to ascertain and quantify if others were inspired to emulate their governor. More definite is that public awareness increased as a result of the *Tasmanian Mail* account of the journey. Perhaps this visit inspired barrister James Coutts to visit St Clair via Bothwell and Lake Echo rather than chance the bad roads from Hamilton to the Lake Country. From Marlborough he and guide Jones senior rode to the Lake but the visit was cut short by an impending storm. His account was classical Romanticism. Mountains, comparable to the European Alps, were 'snow-white sentinels guarding the sacred spot where, far remote from human ken, in solitary beauty, St Clair reposes'.²⁹ Like many before he was enchanted by St Clair and its surrounds. He thought incorrectly that the vast snowfields on Hugel and Ida were 'almost sufficient ... to form a small glacier' and that reports that they were climbable were wrong.³⁰

Another example of the area being valued in itself occurred when Scottish-born John Watt Beattie's commenced his commercial career with a visit to St Clair in 1879. This journey was supposedly momentous for the first use of gelatine Dry-plates at the Lake and possibly also in Australia.³¹ Exactly how many people saw photos of the Lake cannot be ascertained but probably that there was a growing visual and mental familiarity of the Lake amongst the newspaper readers and art appreciators.

There was criticism of the St Clair-Pieman route ranging from comments of wasteful expenditure to TB Moore's avowal that the track was 'at present useless to anyone'.³² In this climate, the Giblin ministry commissioned Moore to explore the country between St Clair and the West Coast in 1883. In using the existing road to

²⁹J Coutts, *Vacation Tours in New Zealand and Tasmania*, Melbourne, 1880, p. 92

³⁰Coutts, *Vacation Tours*, p. 97

³¹J Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia*, Melbourne, 1979, p. 81 which quotes from Beattie's memoirs. Other party members were Alex Riddoch & Richard Smith, a school-teacher

³²*Tasmanian Mail* 10 January 1880 & for Moore, *Tasmanian Mail* 10 July 1880

King William 1, he replicated a journey undergone in part by explorers, stock-riders and prospectors. His route, the Linda Track, from there to the coast became the main artery to the west until replaced by the Lyell Highway in 1931/2. Moore's conclusion that the fertile plains around the King Williams would be suitable for growing artificial grasses gave life to the flickering buttongrass myth.³³

Three years later Surveyor EG Innes travelled this low-level route. To the usual mantra of opening-up country previously inaccessible to the prospector, he added access to 'beautiful scenery of mountain and glade [that] it would be hard to surpass in the southern hemisphere'. Innes believed that the opening of an all-season route would be the forerunner for a railway to the west.³⁴ Along the way, he met government work gangs, who, like shepherds and the telegraph line men in the 1890s,³⁵ had The Reserve as a backdrop to their endeavours. Whether they derived inspiration from the beauty or took the scenery for granted we will never know.

Surveyor General Sprent decided a personal visit along the Linda Track would provide information on potential for settlement, on mineral and timber resources, and transport links required to open up the West, which would form the basis of future government decision-making.³⁶ His Hobartian party's 1887 westward expedition was also important to contemporary society because of the artistic activities of WC Piguenit. Other members of Sprent's party were lawyers JB Walker and AL Giblin, polymath RM Johnston³⁷, Conservator of Forests Perrin, Colonel WV Legge, and HV Bayley, postal official.³⁸ Walker, Piguenit, Backhouse, Sprent and Legge all left impressions, albeit in different genres, of the

³³'Mr TB Moore's Report upon the Country between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', *TPP* [H of A], 1883, No. 56, p. 7 & McShane, 'TB Moore — a bushman of learning', pp. 2-3

³⁴*Tasmanian Mail* 29 January 1897

³⁵*ZDH* 19 January 1891 & McShane, 'TB Moore — a bushman of learning', pp. 59-60 when Moore was superintendent of a gang

³⁶'Report by Deputy Surveyor General Sprent on Ouse to Mt Lyell & Macquarie Harbour', *TPP*, 1887, No 58, p. 3

³⁷For an interesting character assessment see Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, pp. 84-5

³⁸For autobiographical details see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, p. 121

journey which, taken together, provide a unique insight into contemporary thought. Walker's diary and letter to his mother formed the basis of an account, publication of which awaited the sesquicentenary of the Tasmanian branch of the Royal Society.³⁹ Legge, the Tasmanian-born English-educated army officer and noted ornithologist, presented his account to the Royal Society in the year of the walk, 1887.⁴⁰ In contrast the immediate aftermath was tragic: within four months Giblin and Sprent died, the latter from typhoid fever.⁴¹

Walker's comments revealed that the road from Marlborough remained an obstacle course.⁴² Tantalising glimpses of the mountains obtained approaching Orr's hut near Mt Charles became, according to Legge, 'not to be forgotten' views of bold ridges, sharp peaks and smooth outlines from the bridge over the Traveller.⁴³ Their side trip to the Lake was rewarding, all agreeing that they 'had seen nothing so fine in Tasmania' and that with easier access and better publicity 'crowds of tourists would every year make it their resort.'⁴⁴ Sprent's appreciation of landscape was palpable:

No part of Tasmania offers such attractions in the way of beautiful scenery, and were a passable road constructed, these lakes and mountains would be to Tasmania what the lakes are to New Zealand. At present few people have

³⁹Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, pp. 45-6; JB Walker, *Walk to the West*, (ed) DM Stoddart, Hobart, 1993 & JB Walker to his mother from Con Curtain's Hut, Top of Mt Lyell 24 February 1887, RS 5/1 (i)

⁴⁰WV Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', *PPRST* 1887, pp. 114-127; For autobiographical details see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, p. 206

⁴¹Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, death of Giblin p. 45 & Sprent pp. 56-7. For an obituary, see 'Charles Percy Sprent', *Royal Geographical Society of Australia, Victorian branch proceedings*, Vol 3, 1885, pp. 165-66

⁴²Walker, *Walk to the West*, p. 13 described the road as 'merely a cleared track through the bush' on which they 'bounced from boulder to stump, ... till we thought every bone in our bodies would be shaken loose',

⁴³Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 115

⁴⁴Walker, *Walk to the West*, p. 13 Sprent and Legge thought similarly, the former 'for lovers of the picturesque', while the latter suggested that the little-used Scott-Moore's track would be invaluable for pedestrians when the state became the 'tourist land of Australia'. For Sprent, 'Report by Deputy Surveyor General Sprent on Ouse to Mt Lyell', p. 3; for Legge, A Garra (ed) *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*, Sydney, 1886-8, p. 520 provides a different perception, claiming that from the King Williams, sentiments were those of 'awe, accompanied by a sense of forlornness and alienation' because of the absence of connection with man, past or present.

seen the wondrous beauty of Lake St Clair; still fewer have seen the majestic mountains surrounding the lake⁴⁵

Their lament about the need for a boat was heightened by the poor condition of that left by JR Scott.⁴⁶ From the hut at King William, the group detoured to Lake Dixon 'a small romantic lake ... well worth visiting' but the physical costs — twisted ankles, strained tendons, and blisters because of the buttongrass — were high.⁴⁷

Whereas the rest of the party proceeded to the West Coast, Piguénit and Legge retraced their steps to St Clair. With Orr as guide, they followed Scott's now overgrown track along the Vale of Cuvier with its park-like appearance, derived from undulating buttongrass and clumps of eucalypts, enhanced by 'towering walls of Olympus and the precipitous peak of Mount Byron.'⁴⁸ To assist future walkers wishing to ascend Olympus, 'no very difficult matter', they fired the Cuvier Valley. Legge revealed his classical knowledge, naming Lake Sappho and Hermione while comparing tarns on Olympus with those of Cumberland or Wales.⁴⁹ Other observations were practical. Legge suggested that the Lake be a base for exploration of official terra incognita — the Du Canes and between Canning River and Rugged Mountains east of the Mersey.⁵⁰ Legge's exposition of the benefits of the Linda track repeated all existing arguments.⁵¹ Interestingly, his description of forests under Mt Olympus, used by later guide books, was appropriate for all of western Tasmania.⁵² Of lesser import, but significant because of the contrast with

⁴⁵Report by Deputy Surveyor General Sprent on Ouse to Mt Lyell', p. 3

⁴⁶Walker, *Walk to the West*, p. 15

⁴⁷Walker, *Walk to the West*, p. 19

⁴⁸Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 114 & p. 124 for an earlier description of Olympus with the shape 'of an irregular figure of eight, as the flat rocky tract swells out at each end and is contracted to a narrow ridge in the centre

⁴⁹Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 126

⁵⁰Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 125

⁵¹Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', pp. 125-7

⁵²Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 116 & cited in Union Steam Ship Company, *Tourists' Guide to tasmania*, 1896, Hobart, 1896, p. 38

Cradle, Legge noted the insufficiency of Pencil Pine in Cuvier Valley 'for even a limited timber supply.'⁵³

Although Sprent and Legge's accounts gained publicity for the Reserve, in the short term Piguénit's paintings probably attracted public attention. His motivation for this journey was a desire to 'bear testimony, from an artist's point of view, to the wealth of beauty that exists, comparatively unknown in this *terra incognita* ...'⁵⁴ Piguénit was influenced by colleague, Scottish artist Frank Dunnett, who was familiar with mid-19th century artistic conventions and with Hobart's nascent landscape photography school of the 1860s.⁵⁵ Descriptions of the Lake celebrated the picturesque: 'the majestic outlines of Mount Olympus towering up before him in sombre grandeur, the Traveller Range was 'a huge rampart of precipitous mountains'.⁵⁶ Five years later Piguénit's illustrated text to the Australasian Society for the Advancement of Science, advertised the State's wild scenery in tourist promotional schemes. Accompanying monochrome oil paintings (including Mts Gell and Olympus) drew attention to the area.

All the while southern activity was matched by northern interests, which fought to retain Launceston's dominance of Tasmanian mining. Throughout 1879-1880 there was much clamour for a railway extension from Deloraine to Bischoff. Supporting arguments such as opening-up fertile tracts of land at Gad's Hill, discovering stands of export quality timber and above all mineral country, reflected those of their southern counterparts. Northern public meetings echoed such claims with variations of hyperbole and quirks. As ever, differences over route, such as Chudleigh to Gad's Hill and the Railton-Sheffield variants, threatened unity. Prominent attenders were local politician, who by emphasising potential benefits

⁵³Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', p. 123

⁵⁴WC Piguénit, 'The Western Highlands of Tasmania', *Mercury* 24 September 1887

⁵⁵C Johannes & AV Brown, *WC Piguénit 1836-1914: Retrospective*, Hobart, 1992, pp. 10-12

⁵⁶Piguénit, 'Among the Western Highlands', p. 9

from the proposed railway, acted as the archetypal 'roads and bridges' members.⁵⁷ Politicians S Henry MHA and Serjeant Sleight, MHA supported the Chudleigh extension, the former claiming that it passed through 'one of the finest portions of Tasmania, and one known little about by the generality of people'.⁵⁸ Rarely were concerns raised about expenditure and possible increase in taxation to fund proposals. Other boosters were district surveyors, who by indicating land for selection were deemed to be either self-serving in obtaining potential survey fees or acting in the public interest by encouraging selection. District Surveyor HP Sorell's claim that a new bridge over the Mersey would open up 4 to 5,000 acres and avoid the 'present precipitous track over the summit of Gad's Hill' can be seen in this light.⁵⁹ Eventually action replaced words and in March 1883, John Mumford and Henry (Harry) Andrews made a reconnaissance for the Chudleigh Road Trust, but the Giblin Government withdrew funds for the next stage, a road survey, because the gradient from the Mersey to Gad's Hill was 'too steep for anything but a pack track' and overall cost.⁶⁰

By 1886 discoveries at Mt Lyell revived demands for a new western route. At public meetings, with politicians Hartnoll and Lette prominent, an Upper Mersey approach was mooted as being shorter and traversing easier country than the earlier suggestion. Locals 'very conversant with the country', such as W Walters and L Horne, suggested following the west bank of the Mersey from Liena to Howell's Plains, before the proposal became vaguer — by Pretty Sugar Loaf (now Pelion

⁵⁷P. Loveday & A. W. Martin, *Parliament factions and parties: the first thirty years of responsible government in New South Wales, 1856-1889*, Melbourne, 1966

⁵⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 26 July, 9, 23 & 30 August & 18 October 1879. For Sleight *Tasmanian Mail* 29 May 1880 & JM Bennett, 'William Campbell Sleight', *ADB* Vol 6, pp. 135-6, for Henry see S & B Bennett, *Biographical register of the Tasmanian parliament, 1851-1960*, Canberra, 1980

⁵⁹'District Surveyors' Reports', *TPP* [H of A] 1879, No. 133, p 13 & *Tasmanian Mail* 21 June 1879 supplement

⁶⁰*Tasmanian Mail* 21 April 1883 & 'Correspondence re Vote for Survey of Road between Dynan's Ford Bridge, River Mersey and VDL Co's Crossing Place, Forth Bridge', *TPP* 1883-4, No 120. Joseph Roberts of Circular ponds was a member of Andrews party which reached Middlesex Plains. Mumford encountered Surveyor Dooley on a similar mission for a route from Sheffield

East), Du Cane, between St Clair and Eldon Range and west to Mt Lyell. Despite Surveyor Chalmers' cautionary note advising that distance and costs should be essential features in decision making, the meeting was buoyant.⁶¹

In 1888 a party comprising McKenna, Dan Griffin and Bob E began following this line. Perhaps it was a mild early winter for most experienced bushmen would not have begun route searching in early May. Fields' stockman Harry Stanley and Roberts of Circular Ponds packed supplies and undoubtedly provided the all-important local knowledge. Near Howell's Plains, Griffin was so impressed with the combination of 'river, dale and mountain scenery' that he decided if he made his fortune in the west he would persuade his countryman, the painter, Joshua Higgs⁶² to 'transfer this scene to canvas'. From here they continued to The Paddocks, where Stanley's dogs killed two half-grown thylacines, before ascending towards Pelion Plains. Having left pack horses at the Mersey flats, each man now carried a 75 lb swag. Despite steep banks thwarting their first attempt, the group crossed the Forth, probably near Frog Flats. After being camp bound under Pelion West by two days of heavy snow, they forced their way through thick scrub to the range between Rugged Tier and Pelion. However, nomenclature and bearings make it difficult to ascertain the location of either the last-mentioned range or the path to the west. In any case they finally reached the Henty via Mt Tyndall. Griffin's account demonstrated that a link via the central Reserve was feasible.⁶³

Throughout this period, other routes, important for this narrative in that they diverted attention and funds away from The Reserve links, were strongly supported.

⁶¹*Examiner* 18 September 1886 Supplement

⁶²*Tasmanian Mail* 26 March 1892 commenting on the Tasmanian Exhibition described Joshua Higgs junr as 'a great lover of the picturesque, and in his periodical rambles he has transferred many a choice bit of Tasmanian scenery — only secured after a toilsome march — to canvas. For further details Higgs painted Cradle and Barn Bluff from the Western Tiers in 1881, and Lake Marion/Du Cane Range in 1893. Thanks to N Haygarth for these references

⁶³The Tramp, 'From Gad's Hill to the West Coast', *The Colonist*, 19 May 1888

Major north-west coast centres backed themselves to be the terminus for the link with Bischoff. For the most westerly options — Table Cape and Smithton — a passing reference suffices. Distant views of The Reserve from near Black Bluff were possible from the Leven, Penguin and Devonport alternatives.⁶⁴ The other main push involved the south-west. Favoured options included the Florentine and Gordon Rivers and Macquarie Harbour because of cost savings stemming from the existence of Dawson's Road.⁶⁵ Others nominated the Huon via Pedder area to either Port Davey or the lower reaches of the Gordon.⁶⁶ As with all suggested schemes, support from different pressure groups and areas was strong on ambit claims but weak on detailed knowledge of the topography to be crossed.⁶⁷ Others thought that the Derwent Valley extension to either Hamilton or Ouse would be a springboard to a rail link with the West.⁶⁸ West Coasters bemoaned that they were overlooked and thought that the St Clair route was too roundabout and long compared with the more direct Waratah-Emu Bay connection.⁶⁹

There were unintended benefits, mainly scientific flowing from the location and marking of routes. Increased familiarity with the landscape brought greater understanding of its components. This, allied with growing awareness of geology, saw tentative theories about the glacial origin of much of central and western Tasmania. Thus from his reconnaissance between Mt Bischoff and Granite Tor in

⁶⁴Newspapers carried frequent reports throughout this period with *Tasmanian Mail* 12 March, 11 & 18 June, & 16 & 23 July 1881 providing examples

⁶⁵*Tasmanian Mail* 14 August 1880. In 1878 surveyor Thomas Frodsham reported on feasibility of a track from the Florentine to the Gordon River and Macquarie Harbour in 'Mr Surveyor Frodsham's Report on Track from Florentine River Westward across the Gordon River towards Macquarie Harbour', *TPP* [H of A] 1878, No 48

⁶⁶'Mr Surveyor Jones' Report on the Track from Macquarie Harbour to the Upper Huon', *TPP* [H of A] 1881, No. 126

⁶⁷Thus the Hamilton-Florentine-Gordon route blithely assumed that a 25 mile section overland to the Gordon was practicable and the Gordon was navigable for 40 miles *Tasmanian Mail* 9 November 1878

⁶⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 25 June 1881. Surveyor Innes supported the Derwent Valley extension, G Innes, p 6 in 'District Surveyors Reports', *TPP* [H of A], 1882, No 104. The Derwent Valley Line was surveyed by Mault, Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, p. 25

⁶⁹Of the many examples, *Tasmanian Mail* 23 July 1881 is one

1877 Sprent postulated that an ancient glacier flowing from the Barn Bluff-Cradle country produced the Mackintosh Gorge.⁷⁰

Mining fever increased throughout this period. Initially, the mania began in Launceston, because of its proximity to existing fields such as Nine Mile Springs, later Lefroy, Beaconsfield, and north-east tin fields, and later encompassed Hobart. Newspapers fuelled the fever with extensive coverage of all aspects of mining from mine reports to new fields, real or rumoured, and conditions on the fields. Some, however, such as the *Tasmanian Mail* suggested 'this rage for dabbling in mining scrip' needed curbing.⁷¹

The case of the Lake St Clair Mining Association near King William Range, April-May 1881, illustrates many elements of this mania. When rumours circulated that prospector Edward O'Brien together with local pastoralist William Orr, and Dee Bridge Accommodation House owner, Mr Ellis,⁷² had found gold seven miles west from St Clair in a valley under the 'King Billies', the Derwent Valley and Hobart were abuzz. Hopes arose that 'This eldorado was to revive the present deplorable state of business in the South'.⁷³ Clio's lessons, the failure of Dumaresq's party nearly twenty years earlier, were ignored. Reports that the Lake St Clair Association had applied for a protection area, 50 acres, under Goldfield Regulations fuelled rumours. Within days thirty sections surrounding the claim had been pegged and according to hearsay a 5% share sold for £50.⁷⁴ About fifty

⁷⁰Sprent, 'Recent Explorations on the West Coast of Tasmania', p. 58

⁷¹'Not a day passes now but what some new venture is placed upon the market, and the public go into it with the most reckless indifference as to the probable results. So long as they can secure shares in the company, no matter what are the prospects, it matters little to them. It may be a 'good thing', or, what is more likely, an arrant 'duffer', but as long as it represents a certain number of shares on a very nicely lithographed piece of scrip, the speculator is satisfied' *Tasmanian Mail* 17 September 1881

⁷²Walker, *Walk to the West* p. 11 where Ellis was described as a 'bluff thickset Scotchman, full of energy and good spirits, with a voice like a tornado driving tandem'

⁷³*Tasmanian Mail* 7 May 1881

⁷⁴*Tasmanian Mail* 23 April 1881

prospectors, ranging from novices to those with mainland and New Zealand experience, flocked to the area. Soon these hopes were dashed with a telegram from Ouse: 'Arrived from goldfield. It is a swindle. Do not speculate one farthing.'⁷⁵

Parochialism was evident in newspaper coverage. The *Examiner*, which berated the *Mercury* for its reticence concerning the swindle, claimed a Hobart identity persuaded two Launcestonian mining men to purchase a share at £90 on the strength of samples from a purportedly well-defined reef.⁷⁶ When a Launcestonian shareholder and a miner, accompanied by Orr, visited the field they met O'Brien who asserted that he had never seen a speck of the elusive gold anywhere. The Mining Association initially kept a brave face cautioning against pessimism until O'Brien reported unfavourably. Soon worst fears were confirmed: O'Brien sank holes and surface tested the Protection Area and two adjacent ten acre areas but found no positive signs.

Scapegoats were needed. The Association expressed confidence in O'Brien's integrity, while unsuccessful prospector, Edwin Oldham of Hobart, refused to blame Orr and Ellis, asserting that sometimes a single sample was found in an otherwise barren area. He laid blame on individual failings such as laziness, lack of initiative and persistence — some staying for less time than it took their billy to boil — and overindulgence of the contents of certain black bottles that they became bushed despite having a dray road to follow.⁷⁷ One hopeful deplored not 'so much the absence of gold as he does to think how he 'rooshed through them wet mashes' while his mate slumbered peacefully, undisturbed by visions of gold reefs, or of Ellis and party getting up in the night and pegging their ground by candlelight.⁷⁸

⁷⁵*Tasmanian Mail* 7 May 1881

⁷⁶*Examiner* 7 May 1881. A Launceston man was charged with fraudulently obtaining £180. *Tasmanian Mail* 14 May 1881 & *Examiner* 7 May 1881 claimed that Orr, on whom the warrant had not been executed, was the salesman, and that a 3rd party had offered to refund the £180

⁷⁷*Tasmanian Mail* 14 May 1881

⁷⁸E Oldham, 'A Trip to the Golden New Country' *Tasmanian Mail* 10 May 1881

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR GOLD MINING LEASE.

I the undersigned, hereby give notice that on the 21st day of April, 1881, I did leave with the Commissioner for Tasmania an application for a Gold Mining Lease, the particulars whereof are hereunder set forth:—

Name in full of each applicant, with the full address of each.—George Ellis, New Country, River Ouse.

Extent of ground applied for, and whether alluvial or quartz reef.—Ten acres, quartz.

Precise locality of the ground.—South of and adjoining application made by W. Orr, bounded on the east by F. Reynolds' application, and situated on King William Plains.

Term required.—Ten years.

Whether the boundaries of the land applied for will include any river, creek, deposit of permanent water, spring, artificial reservoir, public roads, or subject to any public rights.—

General remarks.—

Date and place.—23rd April, 1881, Hobart.

GEORGE ELLIS.

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR GOLD MINING LEASE.

I the undersigned, hereby give notice that on the 23rd day of April, 1881, I did leave with the Commissioner for Tasmania an application for a Gold Mining Lease, the particulars whereof are hereunder set forth:—

Name in full of each applicant, with the full address of each.—William Orr, New Country, River Ouse.

Extent of ground applied for, and whether alluvial or quartz reef.—Ten acres, quartz.

Precise locality of the ground.—South of and adjoining E. O'Brien's application for a protection order, and north of Ellis's 10-acre application, situated on King William Plains.

Term required.—Ten years.

Whether the boundaries of the land applied for will include any river, creek, deposit of permanent water, spring, artificial reservoir, public roads, or subject to any public rights.—None.

General remarks.—Nil.

Date and place.—23rd April, 1881, Hobart.

WILLIAM ORR.

Figure16: Applications for Gold Mining Leases

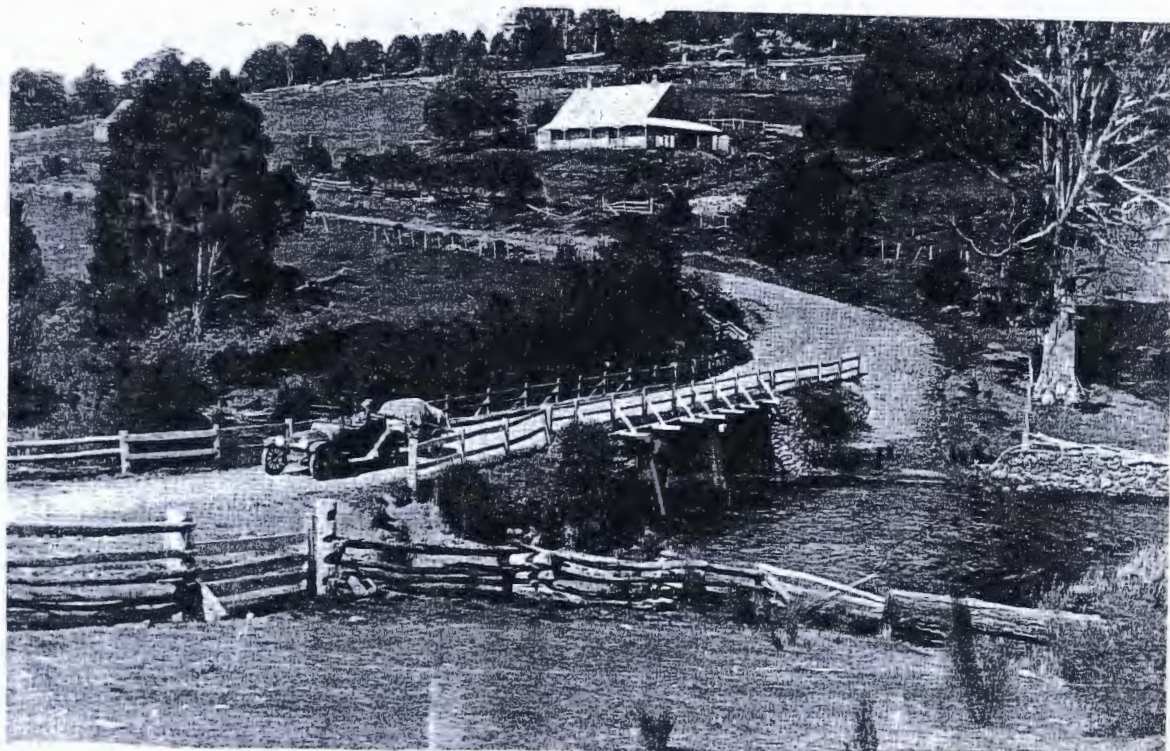


Figure17: Ellis's Accommodation House, Dee River

The sanguine wrote off the episode as part of life while the vindictive sought legal remedy. This bursting of the St Clair mining bubble was a typical example of many future cases.

There was an added dimension to this mineral saga. While seeking gold, Oldham ascended the King William Range — not to do so would have been 'nothing short of the crime of contempt for the beauties of nature.' So exalted were the party by a panorama of mountains and lakes, that they sang 'God save the Queen'. Oldham's account harks back to Gilpin and forward to the wilderness perspective. 'As far as the eye could reach' he enthused, were

mount after mount and peak after peak, with their different lights and shades of colours, all seeming wild enough to defy the intrusion of man, till far, far away west the faintest possible line of fog successfully hid from our eager gaze any chance there might have been of our catching a glimpse of the briny blue; all this coupled with the silence and solitude of the place, made a scene I should imagine it difficult to surpass and which most certainly will never fade from the memory of the writer.⁷⁹

The climb clearly demonstrates an appreciation of walking and climbing in wild areas at least among the well-to-do.

In response to the Lake St Clair Mining Association fiasco, renowned prospector William Robert Bell, Latrobe prospector and discoverer of the Magnet Mine west of Mount Bischoff, EG Sanden and GB Elliott visited the King William Plains in January-February 1881. Bell, a mixture of the aesthete and practical man, was enchanted by the surrounds to their camp near Lake Dixon in a 'picturesque Valley' of the Surprise River, actually the Franklin. He enthused that the picturesqueness derived from the combination of

The varied tints of the foliage and other vegetation in connection with the lakes and tumbling waters, together with the rugged mountain tops as a background to the landscape.⁸⁰

⁷⁹*Tasmanian Mail* 14 May 1881

⁸⁰*Examiner* 29 April 1881

More impressive was the 'magnificent panorama' from the trig station atop Mt Hugel (Rufus). The combination of water — Lake St Clair and the silver thread of the Derwent, dead bleached forests of Marlborough and mountains — a 'succession of abrupt mountains atop each other' and a 'series of serrated summits' — produced one of Tasmania's 'finest landscapes'.⁸¹ Aware of some public familiarity with the lake scenery, Bell refrained from detailed description, although his comparison of the 'cloven peak of Mt Ida ... [to] a bishop's mitre' was unusual. He debunked the volcanic theory of St Clair, instead suggesting glacial origins because of moraines in surrounding area.⁸²

The main purpose of the trip, however, was a geological assessment. Believing that quartz's ubiquity aroused great expectations among 'inexperienced or amateur miners', Bell repeated Gould's qualifications on the results. He cautioned prospective prospectors by noting the quartz was not auriferous and the absence of alluvial gold east of Frenchmans, from which with 'two exceptions, the supposed auriferous gold [of the St Clair Association] was found.' Observing the failure of Clarke and Bethune enterprises on King William Plains and Gordon Bend respectively, (see Chapter 3) Bell refuted the myth of buttongrass plains. He attributed failure of Clarke's pastoral operations partly to thylacines.⁸³

With increased accessibility, prospectors began searching the high country fringing the Northern Reserve. The 1881 investigations of Gad's Hill⁸⁴ and reports of alluvial gold in creeks issuing from Cradle Mountain are pertinent.⁸⁵ Further

⁸¹*Examiner* 29 April 1881

⁸²*Examiner* 29 April 1881

⁸³*Examiner* 29 April 1881 for all references for the paragraph. Near Lake Dixon they shot two thylacines

⁸⁴*Tasmanian Mail* 24 September 1881

⁸⁵Annual report by the Secretary of Mines for 1887-88, *TPP*, 1888, No 47, p. 12

impetus resulted when the ever-optimistic, but not always accurate, government mining geologist Gustav Thureau reported favourably on the Middlesex Goldfields.⁸⁶ Each find saw a few men move further back into unexplored or little known country and encouraged additional prospectors and speculators.

Second Route War

Although the issues underlying the previous route war remained salient, the focus shifted from Waratah to the silver fields around Heemskirk-Zeehan-Dundas. While Bischoff retained its international reputation, the Lyell area coughed and spluttered, and Mounts Tyndall and Read promised much by the early 1890s. Although galena had been discovered in 1882, it was only the rise of Broken Hill which turned attention again turned to Zeehan in the mid-1880s. However, Zeehan's prosperity was threatened by the collapse of the Van Diemen's Land Bank in August 1891 and then by Melbourne's financial freefall.⁸⁷ Other major difference were the preference for railways, rather than tramways and tracks, and the strengthening links with Victoria which temporarily united northern and southern interests.

Sensing government susceptibility to political pressure to fund an alternative link to the VDL Company's 1884 railway to Waratah, railway leagues were formed at Waratah and Emu Bay. Their hunches were correct because by late 1890 the Fysh Government had commissioned three surveys, under the Railway Engineer-in-Chief J Fincham, all terminating at Zeehan.⁸⁸ In experienced explorer-pro prospector James Moore's account of his Glenora to the Henty route in January 1890 there was not a word about views and landscape appreciation.⁸⁹ Experienced railway engineers, H

⁸⁶Report by Mr Thureau on Middlesex Goldfields', *TPP*, No 125, 1889

⁸⁷For a lively account of Zeehan see G Blainey, *The peaks of Lyell*, 3rd edit Melbourne, 1967, pp. 50-6

⁸⁸For overall details of these three approaches see *ZDH* 17 December 1890

⁸⁹Report on the Country between the Ouse and Collingwood River: JL Moore', *TPP*, 1890, No. 78, & 'Annual report for Survey Department', *TPP*, 1889, No 66, p. 5

Single, a Victorian and New South Welshman GW Townsend, oversaw operations east and west from the depôt at Mt. Arrowsmith. The latter abandoned TB Moore's 1883 line in favour of the old Moore-Scott high-level track from the Cuvier Valley.⁹⁰ Investigating the country northwest from Narcissus, Townsend was 'delighted with the country ahead of this, and am at a loss to understand why the road had not been brought this way [to the Eldons via Mt Manfred]' and foresaw no obstacles to the west.⁹¹ The workmen under assistants Messrs H Calder and Mansergh were the first to spend substantial time in this part of The Reserve.⁹² Sale, who had worked on the Emu Bay and Wynyard survey, and G Renison Bell worked on the second proposal from Waratah to Zeehan. The final alternative was the Chudleigh to Zeehan approach, considered in the following paragraph. The unashamedly parochial *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* concluded that the Waratah option was the cheapest and shortest, and crossed areas of known mineral wealth.⁹³

Some hoped that, the Mole Creek to Zeehan line would not only tap the western wealth, but also reverse the fortunes of the Deloraine to Mole Creek line.⁹⁴ This alternative probably drew on that previously described by McKenna in 1888. While conducting their flying survey or 'pioneer track', bushmen William Aylett and John Hetherington Miller sent progress reports included the usual carrots: fine agricultural land, probable mineral bearing country and obstacle-free country ahead.⁹⁵ Officials were unhappy with these 'pioneer bushmen' whose track barely reached pack-track condition and who abandoned work when 'real difficulty commenced'.⁹⁶ In addition to the western route, Allan Stewart reconnoitred around Lake Louisa and the Rugged Range for a possible north-south link to the Ouse

⁹⁰Public Works: Report of Engineer-in-Chief, *TPP*, 1891, No. 118, pp. vi-vii

⁹¹*ZDH* 2 March 1891

⁹²*ZDH* 20 March 1891

⁹³Rae, *A history of railways and tramways*, pp. 18-21; *Wellington Times* October 1891 for Sale

⁹⁴*ZDH* 31 October 1890 'Report of the Mole Creek to Mt Zeehan Railway Survey: Report of the Surveyor in Charge Mr Allan Stewart', *TPP* [LC], No 140, 1891

⁹⁵*ZDH* 19 January 1891

⁹⁶Public Works: Report of Engineer-in-Chief, *TPP*, 1891, p. vi

track.⁹⁷ An unexpected delay occurred when some track workers returned home for the harvest.⁹⁸ Then, with weather deteriorating and difficulties of packing to the Pelion base camp increasing, Stewart split his workforce. One party under his command commenced from Zeehan while Scott superintended the Pelion group.⁹⁹

The report identified two past attempts to find a way to the west from Gad's Hill — the old VDL Company road, and a new PWD one, a bullock track heading south before following the west bank of the Mersey to Howells. Although believing the latter would be viable if widened and corded,¹⁰⁰ Stewart suggested a more direct high level track to plains around Lake Ayr. The party constructed huts at Arm River, Wurragarra River, (from the native word to leap) and Mt Pelion, which could double as 'traveller's resting-houses'.¹⁰¹ To convert the survey into a railway necessitated two large bridges over the Fisher and Mersey Rivers and a 3/4 mile tunnel to overcome a steep precipice on the ascent between the Mersey and button grass plains around Pillinger. The route's viability was questioned when geological surveyor Montgomery queried whether 'a practicable route' could be obtained between the slopes of Du Cane, Ossa and the Eldons.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ZDH 20 March 1891 & 'Report of the Mole Creek to Mt Zeehan Railway Survey', p. 3. Stewart's assistants were WH Scott, Roehricht and Hiller. Well known Mole Creek identity Billy Marchant packed in spirits for the German. The chimney of one camp can be seen today not far off the track to The Paddocks

⁹⁸Don Willcox to Tim Jetson May 1986 described how his dad worked for Scott on the Pelion section. The father claimed that at their most westerly point they could see the smoke from the Zeehan smelters.

⁹⁹Public Works: Report of Engineer-in-Chief, *TPP*, 1891, pp. v-vi & August Johnson's letter in ZDH 28 April 1896

¹⁰⁰'Report of the Mole Creek to Mt Zeehan Railway Survey', p. 4

¹⁰¹'Report of the Mole Creek to Mt Zeehan Railway Survey', p. 4

¹⁰²A Montgomery, 'The Country between Mole Creek and the Mount Dundas Silver-field, and on the discovery of coal at Barn Bluff' in 'Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1892-93', *TPP* 1893, No. 50, p. 3; for details of the New Zealand educated Montgomery see G Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry, 1880-1914', PhD (History) University of Tasmania, 2002, pp. 71-5

While these alternatives were investigated, regional interest in a western railway link remained high. In mid-February 1891 at a meeting of the Hobart and West Coast Railway League, NJ Brown MHA alerted Hobartians to the activity of their northern counterpart, the Mole Creek and Zeehan Association. If the Waratah to Zeehan line proceeded, he asserted, Melbourne would drain wealth from the state. Somewhat disingenuously Brown claimed that all Tasmanians, even Launcestonians, would benefit from a Hobart to west coast link. Parochialism was rampant with some opposing the removal of the bar at Macquarie Harbour because improvement to the port of Strahan would obviate the need for a southern railway link.¹⁰³ Similarly, northerners feared that divisions over the route in their rural hinterland would result in success for their opponents.¹⁰⁴

The Fysh ministry acted quickly. Given the the collapse of the Van Diemen's Land Bank on 3 August,¹⁰⁵ perhaps they hoped that a railway construction inspired boom might be the tonic the colony required. In September 1891 Parliament passed the Derwent Valley and Zeehan and the Waratah and Zeehan Railway Acts.¹⁰⁶ Both specified commencement and completion dates, and construction details such as gradients, curves, rails and freight rates. The controversial suggestion of Melbournian civil engineer CE Hogg and Hobart solicitor Curzon Allport that the southern line end at 'some convenient point' near Zeehan was adopted by Parliament.¹⁰⁷ Promoters of the Waratah link formed 'The Great Northern Railway' syndicate in Melbourne to purchase the Emu Bay-Mount Bischoff Railway. With a direct land route from Zeehan to Emu Bay and a Bass

¹⁰³Jetson, *It's a Different Country Down There*, pp. 41-3

¹⁰⁴*Examiner* 29 August 1891

¹⁰⁵W Tilley, *The Wild West of Tasmania*, Zeehan, 1891, pp 84-5 provides a vivid account of the closure in Zeehan. Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, p. 100 provides examples of the impact in Hobart

¹⁰⁶Derwent Valley and Zeehan Railway Act 1891, 55° Vict. No. 16 & Waratah & Zeehan Railway Act 1891, 55° Vict. No. 15

¹⁰⁷*ZDH* 1 July 1891

Strait voyage, Melbourne was only 18 hours away. Not long after the Chudleigh and Zeehan Railway Act¹⁰⁸ sanctioned the northern proposal. Neither the Hobart nor the Launceston plan materialised. The Great Northern Railway syndicate was unable to raise sufficient capital either in the colonies or in England, despite legislative amendments granting extra time. Often misleading maps and prospectuses, such as the comparison of the Great Northern with the profitable Silverton to Broken Hill line in New South Wales,¹⁰⁹ were designed to woo potential financiers.

In 1893 Howard E Wright mooted a railway extension from Glenora to the West Coast. He suggested there would be a trickle-down effect from the £1 million construction costs and new mineral country would of course be opened up. A novel theme now introduced was the putative impact on the tourism industry. Wright used an argument subsequently adopted in the late 20th century to justify commercialisation of national parks by averring that the light railway

would enable residents, tourists and other visitors to become acquainted with its lakes and highland scenery, which are at present inaccessible except to those few favored ones who are able to endure the hardships and discomforts of making the journey¹¹⁰

Then followed classic boosterism: proper marketing of the area throughout the world would induce 'persons to visit Tasmania to enjoy scenery and climate that have no equal in the southern hemisphere'.¹¹¹

Some mining companies such as the Launceston-based Mole Creek and Zeehan Mineral Prospecting and Exploration Company Ltd, formed in 1891,¹¹² single-handedly tried to bridge the gap between the 'settled districts' and the mineral

¹⁰⁸Chudleigh and Zeehan Railway Act 1891, 55^o Vict. No. 39

¹⁰⁹Rae, *A history of railways and tramways*, pp. 21-22; ZDH 24 June 1891 for Glenora to Zeehan & Walker, *Prelude to Federation*, pp. 147-50; for Great Northern see ZDH 2 October 1893

¹¹⁰ZDH 26 May 1893

¹¹¹ZDH 26 May 1893

¹¹²For its formation see *Examiner* 31 July 1891

country. Dissatisfied with Stewart's railway survey, the Company cut, corded and staked a track across February Plains to the headwaters of the Forth. Around Pelion (West) the track 'could be wonderfully improved', before traversing open country south to the Canning and Murchison Rivers which left them only 30 miles from Zeehan. Chalmers reiterated old claims: it was 'an easy and much shorter route than any other', there was summer pastoral country around Lake Ayr and definite signs of coal.¹¹³ By 1894 the Company's track had reached Mt Inglis. Nevertheless, future success was unlikely in that rail was faster than walking.¹¹⁴ The Company chose experienced western miner Joseph Will from thirty applicants to lead prospecting parties.¹¹⁵ Despite his discovery of coal at Pelion and Barn Bluff in 1892(3) and copper lodes on west bank of Lake Windemere, no profits had accrued. Will continued to superintend operations at Barn Bluff and samples of cannel coal were favourably assessed by the Melbourne Gas Company. Finance was becoming an issue with collapse of Melbourne money markets and only a final call on existing shareholders capital available.¹¹⁶

These surveys and track-cutting opened-up the central and northern Reserve. In 1891/2 Aug Johnston and William Aylett discovered silver/copper near Douglas Creek on Pelion Plains. M O'Donnell and A Goldstraw prospected from Mt Read towards Barn Bluff. They found scant encouragement around the Canning and Bluff Rivers and near Granite Tor where they reached the newly cut Mole Creek track. Despite this, the pair planned another search of the Forth-Murchison watershed.¹¹⁷

¹¹³Annual Report of the Survey Department 1891-92', *TPP*, 1892, No. 76, p. 9

¹¹⁴*Examiner* 1 March 1892

¹¹⁵*Examiner* 12 August 1891 and *Tasmanian Mail* 15 August 1891; by 1894 Will had worked at Mt Lyell and in 1897 was director of Cutty Sark mine near Zeehan & acted as a consultant for mining companies, *Examiner* 21 September 1897

¹¹⁶*Daily Telegraph* 30 September 1893

¹¹⁷*ZDH* 18 October 1892. Another example was JE of Dundas' spent six weeks prospecting between Dundas and Mt Ossa. *ZDH* 13 May 1892

That the many discoveries of minerals made The Reserve inherently valuable was proved by A Montgomery's report, 'The Country between Mole Creek and the Mount Dundas Silver-field, and on the discovery of coal at Barn Bluff'. Montgomery noted the possibility of gold and tin along the edges of Mersey and Forth valleys. He believed that widespread coal measures potentially formed 'the great coal-field of the colony'. Further fuelling the route war was his assertion that it was easy to link Barn Bluff, with its high quality cannel coal, to the Zeehan-Waratah railway.¹¹⁸ This report and attempts to win a mineral fortune will be told in Chapter 8.

There were other indications that The Reserve was increasingly valued for itself. Photographers continued to promote the beauty of the area, thus encouraging recreational walking by a few affluent men and women. The *Guide to Excursionists* proclaimed St Clair the 'most beautiful lake in the colony'. It provided advice on condition of roads, use of guides, and accommodation, with suggestions of leisure activities.¹¹⁹ A sole pedestrian was the exception. Locals acted as guides and packed supplies for groups.¹²⁰ An unusual couple were TB Moore and his wife, Mary, on their honeymoon trip to the west coast in 1889.¹²¹ Circumstances were different in the north. An 1890 account claimed that probably no one had visited Cradle Mt since surveyor CP Sprent in 1854 for the trip was only possible if one was 'prepared for some toil, accompanied by considerable danger'. Prophetically

¹¹⁸A Montgomery, 'The Country between Mole Creek and the Mount Dundas Silver-field', p. 3

¹¹⁹H Thomas, *Guide to Excursionists between the Mainland and Tasmania*, Melbourne, 1883, pp. 126-7

¹²⁰Tasmanian Railways, *A Short Guide to the North Western and North Eastern Districts*, Hobart, 1902, p. 5 described how guides could be obtained from the Mole Creek district

¹²¹McShane, 'TB Moore — a bushman of learning', p. 72. Also unusual were Mr & Mrs Frances Cox walking from Trial harbour to ouse in 1890. They ascended Mt King William & had views of St Clair & Olympus. However they did not visit the Lake, instead continuing to spend the night at Orr's hut at Mt Charles. *Tasmanian Mail*, 22 & 29 March 1890

they asserted that 'An ascent of the Cradle Mt will probably in a few years be a favourite feat of the more adventurous class of tourists in Tasmania.'¹²²

'Peregrinator's' excursion of 1890-91, to be outlined in Chapter 10, which was a forerunner of many expeditions in the late 1890s, was evidence of The Reserve's changing status.¹²³ Also salient were walks on The Reserve's fringes which indicated acceptance of the colonial landscape. Blue Gum's account of his walking trip from Bischoff to Zeehan in 1894 is a mixture of Gilpin appreciation of park-like country and endemic flora. Near Knole and Netherby Plains he spent 'an hour communing with Nature' and stopped to admire stringy bark's of 'immense height, and apparently faultless trunks.' Description of the Pieman, 'one of the loveliest river nooks imaginable' evokes comparisons with Irish Exile John Mitchel's riverine rhapsodies in *Jail Journal*.¹²⁴ Enthusiastic Zeehanite botanist J Fitzgerald traversed the West Coast Range from Mt Darwin to Tyndall Range searching for rare botanical specimens. Fitzgerald gained food for the soul with views of Cradle, Barn and Pelion and food for the body from native raspberries.¹²⁵

Another element in the transformation of the status of The Reserve was the gap between official knowledge of the Reserve and those harnessing its resources. When Dan Griffin suggested in 1894 an allegedly shorter and cheaper route to the west, he indicated that Jack Brown had cut a track suitable for stock from Barn Bluff along the western flanks of Cradle, that is the current Overland Route to the Innes track. Griffin himself claimed 25 years of experience in the area.¹²⁶ Other individuals or groups made trips which did not receive newspaper coverage. Correspondence with Premier Dobson in 1893 revealed several such journeys.

¹²²Union Steam Ship Company, *Tourists Guide to Tasmania*, Hobart, 1890, p. 75 and prediction p. 77

¹²³*Examiner* 28 February, 4 & 11 March 1891

¹²⁴This section is taken from Blue Gum, 'Bischoff to Zeehan on Foot', *ZDH* 6 February 1894

¹²⁵'A Trip along the West Coast Range', *ZDH* 23 April 1894

¹²⁶*Tasmanian Mail* 16 January 1897

John Wat Tyler claimed a visit to mountains, including Cradle and Pelion, whose 'scenery is not to be excelled in the Southern World'.¹²⁷ Ouse pastoralist Frank Pitt was regarded as an expert on Central Plateau lakes and the source of the Mersey according to a local schoolteacher. With a degree of lateral thinking JWH Dicker suggested that as the Iron Store under King William was redundant, it should be moved to St Clair.¹²⁸

Indicative of the Reserve's changing status was government funding — £1,000 to improve access to and erect two accommodation houses at Lake St Clair for tourists. Dobson believed that advertising the 'most beautiful [lake scenery] in the world' would encourage between 300 and 400 visitors a year to the Lake. Many west coasters contrasted this benevolence with frugality towards public works, especially tracks, which would be far more profitable to the state.¹²⁹ This fillip to tourism encouraged an appreciation of wild places which was a prelude to walking in the environs of St Clair. In contrast was a modest degree of interest in Cradle country which was abetted indirectly by government spending on tracks. Already within the state, at places such as Mt Wellington and the Hartz Mountains, walking was a recreational activity valued by private enterprises and government. Thus it was logical to suggest that walking and mountain climbing would be integral parts of any visits to St Clair.

Third Route War

To the established miningfields, Mts Lyell and Bischoff, and Zeehan-Dundas, were added shooting stars such as Mt Dora and a rediscovered Rosebery. But the

¹²⁷Tyler to Dobson, 11 May 1893, PD 1/60 file 103/93; for details of Dobson see EM Dollery, 'Henry Dobson', *ADB* Vol 8, pp. 311-2 & S Bennett, 'Henry Dobson', A Miller (ed) *The Biographical Dictionary of the Australian Senate*, Vol 1, Melbourne, 2000, pp. 227-30

¹²⁸PD 1/60 File 103, 28 February 1893 Dicker to J Hartnoll

¹²⁹ZDH 16 October 1893

brightest of them all was Mt Lyell's copper field, which sparked the third route war.¹³⁰ The *Tasmanian Mail* captured the essence of this new outbreak of rivalry:

The principal subject of discussion during the present month in Southern Tasmania, and incidentally also in Launceston and other parts of the island, has been the importance of connecting Mount Lyell and other parts of the West Coast mining district with the capital by a good road.¹³¹

So great were problems with the bar and main shipping lane of the west coast's obvious port, Strahan, that Hobart, Launceston and Burnie revived plans to monopolise west coast trade by constructing railways. Deputations of prominent businessmen, including potential railway syndicate members, lobbied ministers, and public meetings were held.¹³² As well, north and south formed the North and West Coast Direct Route Association and West Coast Railway League respectively. Southerners added a new argument claiming that a Hobart link would enable west coasters to maintain contact with government and relevant government departments.¹³³ Western voices dissented claiming that while overland routes would be more comfortable than sea travel, the real issue was whether their transport and living costs would decrease.¹³⁴ The *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* campaigned similarly, adding that 'national interests', (that is west coast interests), were crucial to decision making.¹³⁵ Proponents advocated hydro-electrification of the railways, apparently untroubled by this being untested over such distances elsewhere in the world.

The passing of the Great Western Railway and Electric Ore Reduction Company Act in November 1896 continued a long saga of political intrigue, and ultimately public derision. Promoters of the West Coast Railway League were Victorians of

¹³⁰Blainey, *The Peaks of Lyell*, pp. 79-91

¹³¹*Tasmanian Mail* 11 April 1896

¹³²From the plethora of reports of public meetings see *ZDH* 25 April 1896 for Hobart which discussed both route and type of link, *ZDH* 30 April 1896 for Launceston

¹³³*Tasmanian Mail* 11 April 1896

¹³⁴*ZDH* 4 & 12 May 1896

¹³⁵*ZDH* editorial 4 April 1896 compares routes

boundless imagination, and in the case of Sir William J Clarke, son of the plutocrat and pastoralist 'Big' Clarke, of boundless wealth. Proposals included hydro-electric powered lines and smelters near Hobart to employ 4,000.¹³⁶ Government Railways Manager Frederick Back¹³⁷ believed the scheme an extravagance. He urged construction of smelters on the west coast with funds thus saved used to overcome Strahan's infamous harbour bar. To some Back was an iconoclast, while according to others he was the epitome of commonsense. His political masters ignored his practicalities, fearing that such action would enrich Melbourne.¹³⁸ In contrast to the 1896 Act,¹³⁹ which envisaged a line from St Clair via Cuvier Valley and Eldons to Zeehan, the 1907 Act proposed a route via the Vale of Rasselas to near the King Williams and then the Linda Track to Queenstown.

Another challenger arose from the former Great Northern syndicate. In August 1897 JS Reid, inspired by the Silverton railway's role in saving Broken Hill, formed the Emu Bay Railway Company which leased the Emu Bay and Mount Bischoff Railway concessions. Armed with verbal approval of the Braddon Government, Reid was able to garner the support of Bowes Kelly, mining magnate, and thus other businessmen. History repeated itself. Northern interests were tardy in organising themselves, and it was not until 1899 that the Great Midland and West Coast Railway and Ore Reduction Act was passed. There were similarities with the earlier proposed line to Zeehan: Mole Creek was to be the departure point and again funds could not be found.¹⁴⁰ Perhaps the key from this plan was that The Reserve still remained a stepping stone to the west.

¹³⁶Jetson, *It's a Different Country down there*, p. 44 & Rae, *A history of railways and tramways*, pp. 100-4 for a general view. *HG* 8 September 1896 contains a summary of the proposed Bill

¹³⁷For background of WFC Back see HJ Gibbney & A Smith, *A Biographical Register 1788-1939*, Vol 1, Canberra, 1987, p. 25; for autobiographical comment see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Hobart, 1900, Vol 1, p. 153

¹³⁸Blainey, *Peaks of Lyell*, pp. 114-5

¹³⁹1896 Great Western Railway Company Act 1896 60 Vict Private

¹⁴⁰Blainey, *Peaks of Lyell*, pp. 115-118 & for prospectus for Great Northern see *Examiner* 22 September 1897

Perusal of evidence to select committees into the Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill and Great Midland and West Coast Railway in 1897 offers fascinating insights.¹⁴¹ Witnesses can be categorised into those who had visited or worked in the area, those who had no physical knowledge but hoped to profit from its resources and disinterested public servants. The first mentioned included those such as Josiah Innes, Will, Parsons and Aylett involved in surveys in various capacities, and Deloraine general merchant and mine manager RP Furnage,¹⁴² who visited the scene of their investments. More numerous were those with only a financial interest. Amongst these were businessmen and pastoralists such as EH Heazlewood of *Glenore*, Hagley; Launceston merchant Arthur Hinman; shareholders in proposed syndicates such as accountant FW Hales, secretary of the Tasmanian Central and West Coast plan and Launceston mayor, politician and advocate of all matters northern, RJ Sadler promoter of the Great Midland and West Coast scheme.¹⁴³ A third group consisted of public servants, usually heads of relevant government departments, included Counsel from Lands and Surveys, Mines' Secretary WH Wallace¹⁴⁴ and the controversial Back from Railways. The last-mentioned believed a survey to be a pre-requisite, a point ignored by government, and that fixed termini should be incorporated into the private bills. Back suggested that there were better routes than that from Mole Creek and that

¹⁴¹Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, 1897 (Private): Report of Select Committee, *TPP*, 1897, No. 74, & 'Great Midland and West Coast Railway, 1897 (Private): Interim report of Select Committee', *TPP*, 1897, No. 75. For a summary of the bills for the Great Midland scheme, Mole Creek, Dundas & Zeehan railways, and Tasmanian Central and West Coast, or Mole Creek and West Coast plan, respectively see *HG* 5 October 1897

¹⁴²A Londoner by birth, Furnage was a trader and storekeeper in Pretoria, Transvaal, before arriving in Tasmania. For further autobiographical detail see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, pp. 231-2

¹⁴³For Sadler, see B Payne, 'Robert James Sadler', *ADB*, Vol 11, pp. 506-7. For men of standing of Tasmanian Central syndicate, previously involved in the Direct Route Association, were predominantly northerners see 'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill ...', p. 15 for GT McKinlay & for shareholders see FW Hales p. 20; Hinman, according to N Haygarth, was a director of the Shepherd & Murphy mine at Moina

¹⁴⁴G Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry, 1880-1914', PhD (History) University of Tasmania, 2002, pp. 100-101 claimed that Wallace was inadequate, partly because he had no mining experience, and timid in dealing with politicians

syndicate railways were not beneficial to the state.¹⁴⁵ The overwhelming majority of witnesses, however, believed the opposite. *Strathroy* pastoralist CB Grubb encapsulated these view avowing that primary producers 'should have a better market for the stock; and I think it would be a great help to agriculture generally.'¹⁴⁶

Evidence was a mixture of hearsay and personal experience, with a local knowledge sufficient to bestow 'expert' status on testimony, and perhaps increase future employment opportunities. Lack of topographical knowledge, even from those acquainted with the area, indicated that significant portions of The Reserve were still unknown. Contention over the the source of the Mersey illustrates the point Aylett claimed it rose at the back of the Du Canes, while JH Miller thought that the two branches rose in the Lakes and at the back of Pelion. Miller also indicated confusion over what constituted the Murchison, Mackintosh and Canning rivers. Further bewilderment for contemporaries and subsequent historians arose when Hinman stated that East Pelion was the local name for Ossa.¹⁴⁷

With mining the overriding issue of the day, questions elicited details of local resources, especially those at Pelion. Although there were disputed claims of discovery, such as Aylett's finding of coal at Pelion,¹⁴⁸ there was unanimity that the absence of a rail link retarded operations. Other comments related to transport and

¹⁴⁵'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', pp. 15-30; for other examples of his oppositional views see 'Report of the General Manager of Railways on probable effect on Government Railways of the the VDL Company's Waratah to Zeehan Railway, with a Branch to Lyell', *TPP*, 1897, No. 60, p. 3; 'The Great Midland and West Coast Railway Bill, (Private): Report of the General Manager, Tasmanian Government Railways, as to the probable effect on Government Railways', *TPP* [H of A], 1899, No. 50 & 'The Great Midland and West Coast Railway Bill, (Private): Further Report of the General Manager, Tasmanian Government Railways', *TPP* [H of A], 1899, No. 50A

¹⁴⁶'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill', p. 2

¹⁴⁷'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', pp. 3 & 5 & for Ossa, Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill', p. 12

¹⁴⁸'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', pp. 1 & 5 for Aylett

the quality and extent of resources. Witnesses extolled the quantity and quality of coal: Furnage thought seams were 'practically inexhaustable' and mine manager Thomas Teasdale, with a quarter of a century experience in South Yorkshire Collieries, proclaimed the good smelting coal to be 'the best coal in Tasmania.'¹⁴⁹

Debate over the northern and southern routes continued. John Bradley MHA, Chairman of the Hobart Stock Exchange and long time enthusiast for the West,¹⁵⁰ urged the continuation of the Derwent Valley line because of the distance, ease of construction, opening-up of agricultural country, and tourism potential.¹⁵¹ Against a backdrop of continued lobbying, work continued on the track between Mt Arrowsmith and Lyell. James Moore's pronouncements that a shorter road could not be found justified continuing government spending on the route.¹⁵² Subsequently, his brother TB Moore entered the fray. Contrasting himself with those who were 'more or less unacquainted with the subject on which they write', he asserted that nineteen years exploring experience 'entitles me to be ranked as a first authority on railway routes to this part of the island'. His comments ranged from disapproval of routes to the Gordon River, reservations about the Mole Creek option, and praise for that via the Collingwood Valley and Linda.¹⁵³

The *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* at an early stage favoured a northern approach on the basis of distance, comparative cost and probable benefits to the state.¹⁵⁴ In the north, the North and West Direct Route Association was formed in April 1896. It commissioned Charles Russell and William Aylett to lay out a practicable track

¹⁴⁹'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill', pp. 8-9 & 12 & 'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', No 74 p 8-9

¹⁵⁰For biographical details see *ZDH* 15 November 1900 & *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, 1900, pp. 85-6

¹⁵¹*ZDH* 13 March 1896

¹⁵²*ZDH* 14 April 1896

¹⁵³*ZDH* 30 May 1896

¹⁵⁴*ZDH* 11 April 1896

which followed Stewart's track to Barn Bluff then westerly towards Granite Tor, Mt Black and Rosebery.¹⁵⁵ Russell also investigated a more northerly route via Middlesex, Black Bluff Range and thence Meredith's track towards Rosebery. The assumption that he would be able to supply the Association with 'the most reliable information' become significant in the light of the Innes survey.¹⁵⁶

In October 1896 the Huon-based EG Innes began work in high hopes because of the local knowledge of his guide Russell¹⁵⁷ and consultation with the Launceston and North-West Direct Route Association on the route via Pelion West and Granite Tor. Initially, Innes mainly followed the old route with some deviation to reduce gradients and to avoid John Field's selection at Gad's Hill. On Mackenzie Plain, now known as February Plain, he skirted under The Divide instead of following the more exposed plateau track cut earlier for the Mole Creek & Chudleigh Prospecting Association and used by cattle.¹⁵⁸ Then they followed the old route until the southern end of the February when Innes headed around the south east spurs of Mt Oakley and onto open country around Lake Ayr. Here the party followed Stewart's line to his old camp at Pelion East. It took a week to cut and mark a track to the tributary of the Forth, nowadays recognised as the River itself. Difficulties threatened with the

rugged old mountain [Pelion West], frowning upon us with his sides clothed with a dense growth of all the rubbish indigenous to this portion of Tasmania, certainly did look a formidable obstacle standing directly across our path.¹⁵⁹

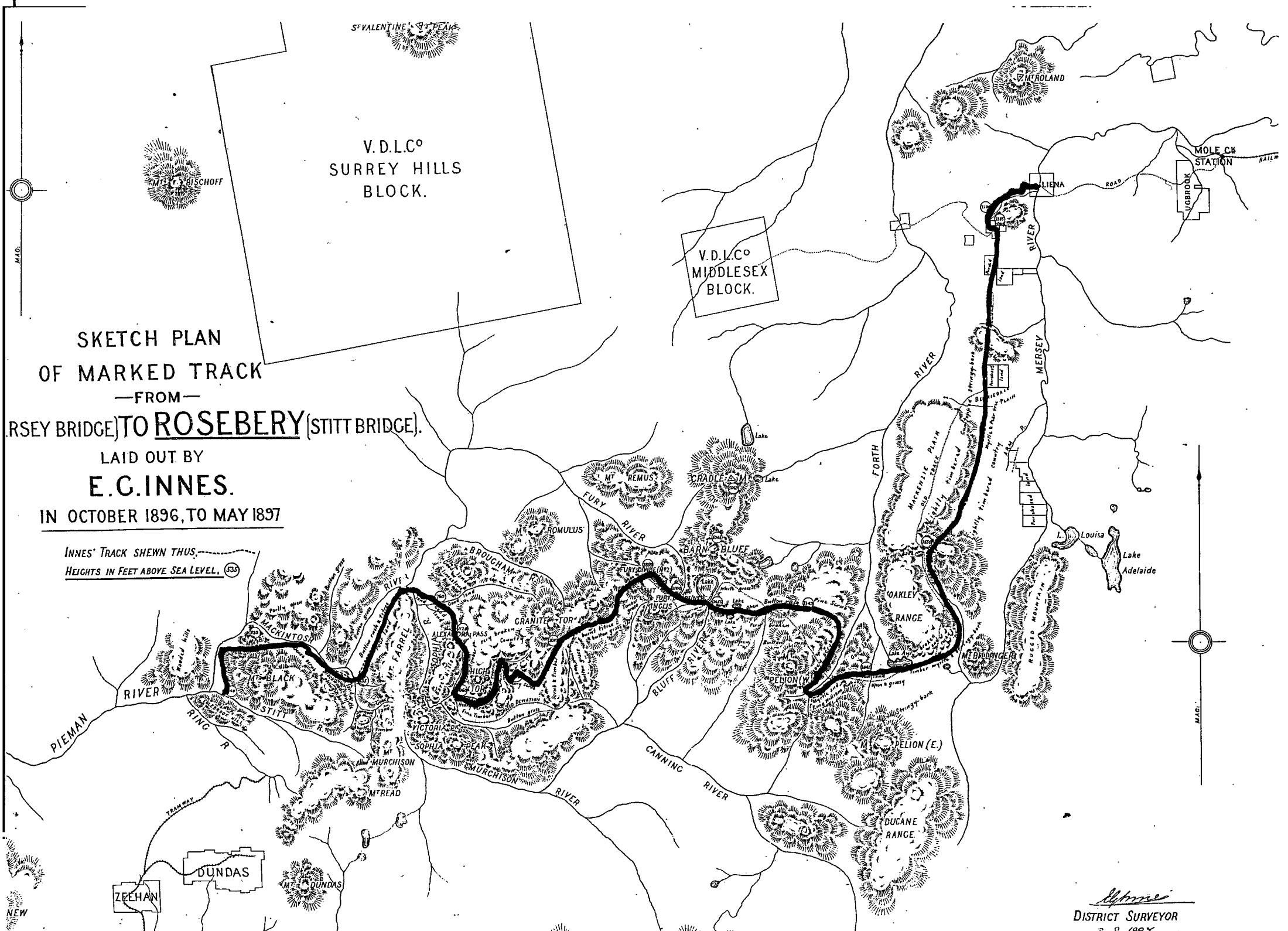
¹⁵⁵ZDH 30 April 1896

¹⁵⁶ZDH 20 June 1896

¹⁵⁷'Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes upon the Track from Mole Creek to Rosebery, Mount Reid', *TPP*, 1897, No. 43 & for general account G Lambert, 'Innes Track — Liena to Rosebery', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 22, 1976, pp. 55-64

¹⁵⁸Peter Brown's assertion in 'Innes Track', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 34, 2002, p. 37 that this was an odd choice, ignores the frequent thick fogs which exacerbate route finding. The death of Connelly, the Rosebery publican, on the southern end of the February in 1901 exemplifies the dangers.

¹⁵⁹'Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', p. 4



However, such problems did not eventuate. There was a similar pattern of apparent difficulties in road making across buttongrass country broken by deep ravines occurred to Lake Will but these too proved minimal. Innes bagged two peaks, Barn Bluff and Cradle, but attempts to reconnoitre were hampered by bush fires. On Cradle on the last day of 1896, surveying's past and present met when Innes and Russell found Sprent's trig station.¹⁶⁰

From the camp under Barn Bluff, westward advance was hampered by nature — heavy rain, fog and snow and country 'terribly broken by gorges and ravines' — and perhaps more disconcerting, the discovery that Russell's supposed knowledge was a myth.¹⁶¹ From Granite Tor, Innes reversed roles with Aylett becoming the guide and Russell relegated to a packer. During the remainder of the trip they encountered the usual obstacles of western exploration: strong winds and snow, dangerous river crossings¹⁶² and a patch of thick bauera. Finally in late May 1897, after nearly 30 weeks of bush camps the party enjoyed a night of luxury at Tasmanian Copper Mine camp.

Like earlier explorers, Innes commented on all known resources, some of which were subsequently harnessed. Thus the white grass enjoyed by jaded pack horses around Lake Ayr subsequently provided summer grazing for cattle. More importantly, Innes thought the area westward from Pelion East gave 'indications of being a valuable mineral field.' Already the pyrites lode containing silver, copper and gold was being investigated. Other notable finds included coal seams at Pelion

¹⁶⁰Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', p. 5

¹⁶¹Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', p. 5, a point disputed by Brown, 'Innes Track', p. 36

¹⁶²In crossing the Murchison where the Innes brothers and Russell had to make three crossings each time laden with 60-70 lb packs, Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', p. 7

West and samples of surface cannel coal, 'the seam apparently having been broken up by some convulsion of nature.'¹⁶³

As expected northern and southern views of the suitability of Innes' route differed. The southern press publicised attacks by Griffin and Chalmers about the conditions along the track, while Aylett and Innes defended their line with equal vigour.¹⁶⁴ Chalmers' views contained the kernel of truth, describing the section west from Liena as being 'in a state of nature, or more properly speaking 'self-made,' by cattle & pack horses, and during the winter months is, in places, exceptionally dangerous.'¹⁶⁵ He believed that the route could be shortened, steep grades reduced and distance through snow regions much diminished.¹⁶⁶ Despite this sparring, Parliament voted £3,000 in early 1898. Northern Road inspector George Simmons despatched two gangs, the eastern under Broomhall, probably the bushmen-snarer known to have frequented the Walls of Jerusalem, and Coleman's western gang. For our story Broomhall's work is more important. He used his discretion to deviate from Innes' line especially on the February Plains, around Oakleigh and Forth Gorge.¹⁶⁷ As winter approached the work ceased, and after beginning anew in December that year, the two parties joined in April 1899. By then Rosebery's fortunes had deteriorated and the Emu Bay Railway had rendered the track redundant. Mt Lyell was the new beacon in the west and Aylett and a Launceston surveyor were despatched to find a more southerly route. Again lobbying occurred and Ewart found the requisite line. About the same time Nature conspired with opponents to block the track with large numbers of trees following heavy snow falls.¹⁶⁸ Road gangs, usually farm labourers and bush hands, who spent

¹⁶³Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', p. 10

¹⁶⁴'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', p. 11 Aylett's views were quoted during the Committee' hearings. For Griffin's criticism see *Tasmanian Mail* 16 January 1897

¹⁶⁵'Report of the Surveyor-General & Sec for Lands:1897-8', *TPP*, 1898, No. 56, p. 26

¹⁶⁶'Report of the Surveyor-General & Sec for Lands:1897-8', p. 26

¹⁶⁷*Examiner* 23 & 24 March 1898

¹⁶⁸'Report of the Surveyor-General & Sec for Lands 1900-01, *TPP*, 1901, No. 47, p. 28

considerable time living in the high country, and experiencing all its elemental forces, are often forgotten amidst the political machinations and parochialism.¹⁶⁹

During Broomhall's work the *Examiner* editor, Frank Prichard, bushman Philip Parsons, and photographer Steven Spurling junr made two trips.¹⁷⁰ A little later JW Beattie's trip to Pelion Plains via this track further publicised the area, as will be outlined in Chapter 10. Innes' track directly influenced the taking up of additional mineral sections in the Pelion area.¹⁷¹ For over 40 years it was a western conduit for many travellers, pre-dominantly prospectors and miners. Today the Overland Track from near New Pelion Hut largely follows Innes until Lake Windemere with the section from Wurragarra Creek forming the Arm River. The track was well marked with some posts still visible west of Lake Will into the late 1980s. Modern walkers concur with Innes' assertion that the area, particularly 'mountain and lake scenery, ... in the vicinity of Barn Bluff and Cradle Mountain, ... forms one of the most beautiful portions of the Colony'.¹⁷² His claim was one of the earliest official recognitions of the aesthetic attractions of the Northern Reserve. While not a pioneering expedition in that most of the country or at least broad topographical features were known, there were considerable hardships such as 47 days of heavy rain from March until the trip end. In this sense the expedition was an exemplar of track marking and cutting, especially from the Pelion East camp.

¹⁶⁹For the Innes track, most were from Chudleigh-Mole Creek area & earnt 7/- daily with extra for gangers. *Examiner* 24 March 1898

¹⁷⁰*Examiner* 22, 23, 24 & 25 March 1898. For autobiographical details of Prichard see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 2, 1900, p. 80

¹⁷¹'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', p 40 for WH Wallace, Acting Mines Secretary

¹⁷²*Examiner* 30 December 1896 for 'North and West Direct Routes ... Charming Scenery'. Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes', pp. 10-11. Notable in his opposition was Dan Griffin who claimed the Northern Reserve was inferior to Lake Lea (the Killarney of Tasmania) on the Vale of Belvoir. *Tasmanian Mail* 16 January 1897

A track, either Innes' or an alternative, was needed to develop Barn Bluff and Pelion mining fields.¹⁷³ Assistant Government Geologist George Waller believed Innes' track to be circuitous, and a twenty mile section in winter was potentially snow bound. From Gads Hill, Waller proposed a line to the Forth valley and then an ascent to the high country either by Commonwealth Creek or Swallows Creek.¹⁷⁴ District Surveyor David Jones thought a track from Surrey Hills to Innes' track west of Mt Pelion was necessary to open up tributaries of the Mackintosh. Jones's proposal would cross the Vale River, continue east of Mts Remus and Romulus and west of Barn Bluff.¹⁷⁵ Prominent prospector, Tom Macdonald of Rosebery, suggested a low level line through the Murchison, Canning and Wallace valleys. In support Macdonald cited an expedition from the Linda track near Mt Arrowsmith to the Innes track near Pelion Plains. Using The Reserve's mountainous western boundary as their guide, they crossed tributaries of the Canning before passing over the Du Canes to the watershed of the Murchison and Mersey rivers. Macdonald suggested that the unnamed and unmarked head of the Canning be called the Wallace River. In following this line they were probably the first since Gould in the 1860s. They observed coal seams from Coal Hill in the south to Pelion Plains in the north and found traces of copper, gold, silver and lead but not in commercial quantities. Major topographic features were named and charted by 1898 and the group was aware of the Government tourist cottage at St Clair.¹⁷⁶

In 1898 W Ross Reynolds surveyed a route from Sheffield to Rosebery in response to another proposal for a connector to the North East Dundas railway. His work touched the northern and north-western fringes of The Reserve. Like

¹⁷³Report of the Surveyor-General & Sec for Lands, 1897-98', *TPP*, 1898, No. 56, p. 26

¹⁷⁴G Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of Bell Mount, Dove River, Five-Mile Rise, Mt Pelion & Barn Bluff', in 'Annual report for the Mines Department, 1900-01', *TPP* 1901 No. 4, p. 71

¹⁷⁵Report of the Surveyor-General & Sec for Lands, 1897-98', p. 28

¹⁷⁶*Examiner* 21 March 1898

Fossey in 1827, Reynolds soon realised the difficulties ascending from the Forth to the Middlesex Plains. A fortnight's investigations proved the futility of any approach via the Dove River which tumbled through a 'frightful gorge, with cliffs 500ft to 600ft high'.¹⁷⁷ Thus Reynolds settled on a line from Wilmot which ran smoothly till near the Iris-Vale of Belvoir divide. Traversing the 'very rough and precipitous side[d]' Vale Gorge posed problems, but as it was the 'only and lowest valley towards the west coast',¹⁷⁸ a stoic Reynolds continued. Rugged terrain and dense scrub near the Fury River and charts of the Mackintosh country, 'mere sketches and too unreliable to make a proper estimate of direction and distances along exploration',¹⁷⁹ hampered progress. Reynolds thought the road favourable for a 2ft light railway and reiterated the usual advantages.¹⁸⁰

Early in 1901, Robert Ewart continued the track he had cut the previous year from Red Hills to Eldon Bluff,¹⁸¹ onward to St Clair thus completing a track mooted almost a quarter century earlier. Ewart worked backwards from his intended destination, St Clair, because cheaper provisions could be obtained from Ouse, the country was more easily crossed, and the government tourist cottage at St Clair was a handy dépôt. The route up the Cuvier Valley to Eldon Bluff was the old high-level Moore-Scott track. As the party,¹⁸² proceeded westward the weather deteriorated until rain, hail and snow retarded operations in the latter stages. Alone, Ewart investigated the country between Eldon Bluff and Innes' track and believed a

¹⁷⁷Report of Exploration Surveys for Extension of North-East Dundas Tramway towards the Western District: Sheffield to Rosebery Route', *TPP*, 1899, No. 43, p. 3

¹⁷⁸Report of Exploration Surveys for Extension of North-East Dundas Tramway ... ' p. 4

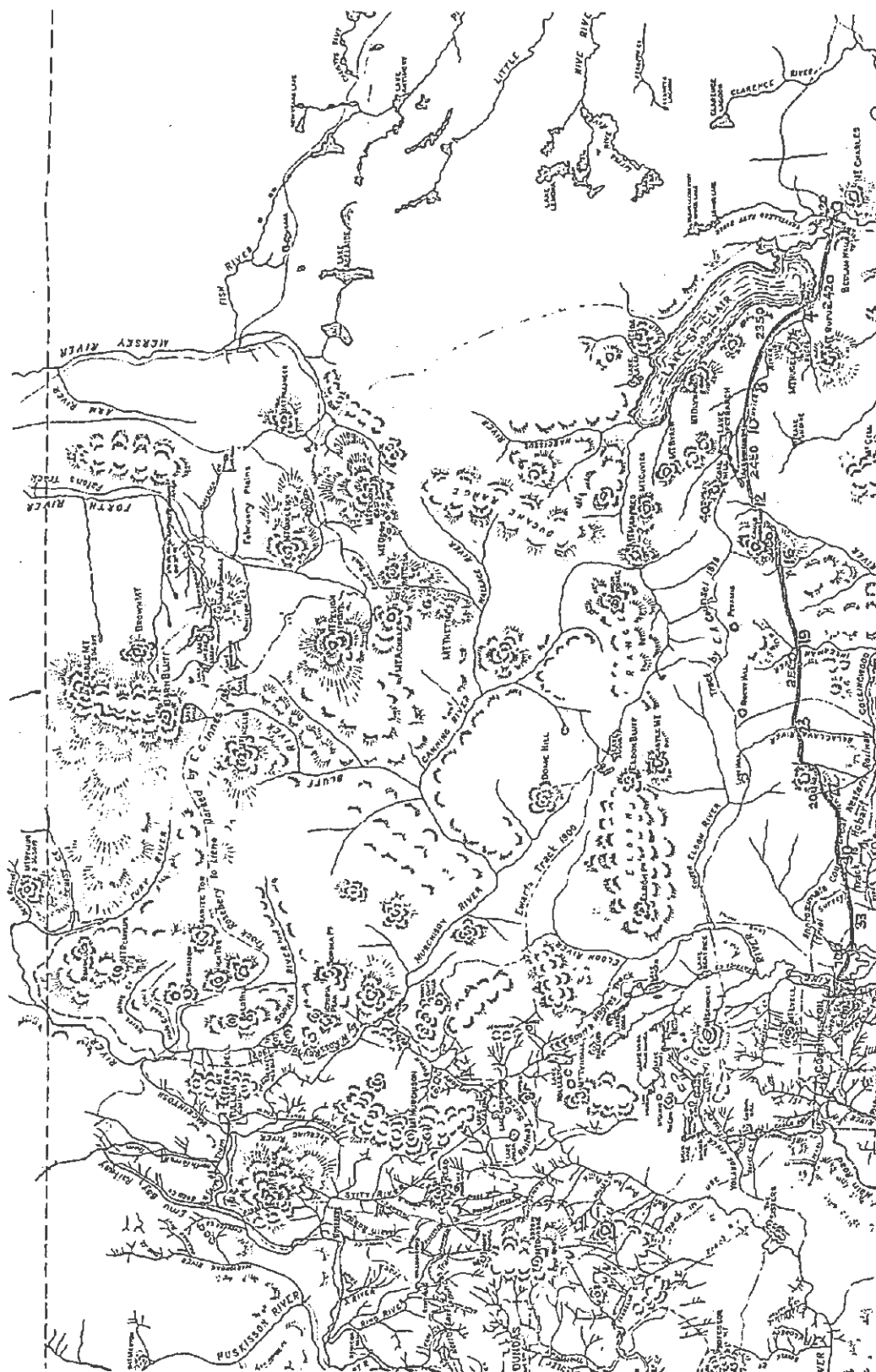
¹⁷⁹Report of Exploration Surveys for Extension of North-East Dundas Tramway ... ' p. 3

¹⁸⁰Report of Exploration Surveys for Extension of North-East Dundas Tramway ... ' p. 5; also *ZDH* 11 July W Ross Reynolds Sheffield to Rosebery & support for the plan in *ZDH* 11 November 1899; also evidence in hindsight 'Proposed Railton-Wilmot Railway: Report of the Royal Commission', *TPP*, 1902, No. 59, pp. 69-72

¹⁸¹R Ewart, Report on exploring the Track from the Red Hills to Eldon Bluff', pp. 52-3 in 'Annual report of the Department of Lands & Surveys Year', *TPP* 1900, No. 44

¹⁸²Other party members were Alan Pybus, James New, Leslie Ims and Charles V Roberts

Figure 19: Exploration Tracks in 1900



link was possible despite the rough, broken and, at times, heavily timbered country.¹⁸³

Later that year Ewart received instructions for the final stage from the Linda Track near the King River crossing via the Eldons to Innes Track. He was to locate the main direction for a route rather than the more costly 'best actual position for a road'. Counsel suggested keeping to the west of Du Canes and Ossa because of the 'very rough and broken country ... [with] deep ravines towards the head of the Canning river'.¹⁸⁴ But experience taught Counsel not to be prescriptive leaving the final choice to the man in the field.¹⁸⁵ Ewart's party departed Mole Creek in early January. Atrocious weather, especially heavy snowfalls and fog, thwarted progress.¹⁸⁶ South-west of the Pelion Huts, Ewart headed south crossing the watershed of the Canning, then its tributaries before ascending to Fossil Hill and then intersected his Lake Selina-Eldon Bluff track cut in 1900.¹⁸⁷

Ewart was optimistic that with few deviations this stock route to Mt Lyell would be a boon to Mersey-Deloraine stockbreeders, especially the Field family, because of the shorter distance. He collected geological samples and assessed timber, agricultural and mineralogical resources. Ewart noted the coal workings under the northern face of Ossa and, more importantly, the auriferous potential of the Canning River. He repeated his suggestion for a track along the Mersey and east of the Du Canes towards Coal Hill thus opening up virgin prospecting ground.¹⁸⁸ A quartet

¹⁸³Annual report of the Departmen of Lands & Surveys, 1900-01, *TPP* 1901, No. 47, p. 16

¹⁸⁴*ZDH* 20 June 1901 'Coal from Coal Hill' reports tests on coal samples and notes that all coal used in Zeehan is imported from elsewhere. It quotes timber and coal prices

¹⁸⁵Counsel to Mulcahy 28 November 1901 LSD 1/268 8100c/208 Counsel to Mulcahy 28 November 1901. The new party consisted of Ewart, Pybus, H Edwards and W Buddon

¹⁸⁶Ewart to Counsel 28 January and 20 February 1902 from Mt Pelion camp LSD 1/268 8100c/208

¹⁸⁷Ewart to Counsel 28 January and 20 February 1902 from Mt Pelion camp LSD 1/268 8100c/208

¹⁸⁸R Ewart, 'Report on the Track Mt Pelion towards Gormanston via Eldon Bluff', pp. 37-38 in 'Department of Lands & Surveys Report for 1901-02', *TPP* 1902, No 42, p. 38

of well-known prospectors attempted to reach this new country but retreated because of inclement weather.¹⁸⁹

Syndicate promotion continued. Previously mentioned topographical inaccuracies were now used, accidentally or deliberately, as part of a continuing north-south rivalry. In an attempt to boost support for his failing line, Harcourt Palmer, agent for the Great Western Company, placed the Barn Bluff mining field 'near' St Clair despite being over 20 miles north as the crow flies. The *Examiner* retaliated claiming this was 'mere 'tarradiddle' because the field was logically connected with the Mole Creek route. Furthermore, despite the *Mercury's* best efforts, southern support for the Great Western was dwindling.¹⁹⁰

The part adoption of Napier Bell's proposals to deepen the entrance to Macquarie Harbour was the death knell of the inconsequential 'Great Midlands'. The Great Western saga tarried until 1907 when Montagu Rhys-Jones' act of revival¹⁹¹ was vanquished by parliament. While the Great Western dream foundered on an inability to raise finances, the physical manifestations still linger on buttongrass plains in the Vale of Rasselas.¹⁹² There were sporadic moves to revive links with the West. Bowes Kelly longed for a road to the west from his property, *Norton Mandeville*, to avoid a 380 miles and nearly 36 hour railway trip from Hobart to Queenstown. The next chapter will discuss other attempts to link the capital with the 'Lost Province' of the West.

¹⁸⁹Ewart, 'Report on Track Mt Pelion towards Gormanston', p. 38 re turning back of miners George Sloane, N Todd, M O'Donoghue and H Appleby

¹⁹⁰*Examiner* 16 March 1901

¹⁹¹M Rhys Jones, *The Great Western Railway in relation to the state and Labour*, Hobart, 1907

¹⁹²Rae, *A history of railways and tramways*, pp. 64-67, 99-104; all newspapers contained frequent references to the railway imbroglio; for comment on the Great Midland and West Coast Railway Bill, 'The Great Midland and West Coast Railway Bill, (Private): Report of the General Manager, Tasmanian Government Railways', 1899, No. 50 & 'The Great Midland and West Coast Railway Bill, (Private): Further Report of the General Manager, Tasmanian Government Railways', 1899, No. 50A ; Blainey, *Peaks of Lyell*, pp. 102-124

Something Hidden in the Ranges

While the above account has presented The Reserve primarily as being a place of transit, there were plentiful indications that increasingly it being valued for itself, or to paraphrase Kipling's 'The Explorer', for its 'Somethings hidden in the Ranges' that became important. These 'somethings hidden' were minerals, grazing lands, the landscape itself for the tourists and walkers, photographer-artist and scientist, water resources and native fauna for the hunter-snarers. As the tale of resource harnessing is the subject of separate chapters, pertinent details are kept to minimum. Rather, the emphasis is upon exploitation of The Reserve's natural resources.

Montgomery's report on mining operations at Pelion and Barn Bluff in 1893, outlined earlier in this chapter, was an indication of this transformation. Contemporaneously with Ewart's operations, Waller's 1901 report on mines in the Middlesex and northern Reserve¹⁹³ gives a detailed picture of operations more fully discussed in Chapter 8. With emphasis on copper mines at Barn Bluff and activities at Pelion, the report indicates the activity in and value placed on The Reserve itself. That mining was still ascendant was seen in the Surveyor CS Wilson's proposal for a track from the Innes track near Pelion Plains, around the Du Canes to the Narcissus Valley and St Clair to open up the country for prospectors.¹⁹⁴

Another indication of the increasing value of The Reserve arose from investigation of water resources. The irrigation potential of the Central Plateau's dominant topographical feature, lakes, had been recognised since Strzelecki's and Captain Cotton's observations in the early 1840s. Others such as Signor Martelli and the

¹⁹³Waller, 'Report on the Districts of Bell Mount, ...', pp. 66-67

¹⁹⁴Department of lands & Surveys: Report for 1901-02', p. 28

opinionated Calder also recognised potential benefits.¹⁹⁵ To irrigation, Danish civil engineer KL Rahbek added another potential use, the generation of hydro-electricity. Tentative plans for this fashionable form of power were considered in relation to various railway and mining proposals. Rahbek defined the watershed and ruled out any specific site for a weir because of low lying marsh land until surveys were conducted. However, he suggested the weir be located as close as possible to the Lake basin, and that by a series of canals, drops and power stations, electricity could be transmitted 30-50 miles with the last station located at the confluence of the Derwent and Dee. This, combined with schemes associated with the Great Lake and Lake Echo, would, in Rahbek's view, improve the 'industrial & commercial interests in this State'.¹⁹⁶

Grazing patterns, predominantly transhumant, continued in the south and the north. In the latter selectors began moving southward along the valleys of the Forth and Mersey. Many supplemented a somewhat precarious existence by hunting and prospecting in adjacent areas. Insights into this pioneering world and names of selectors can be gleaned from official sources such as the the 1902 Royal Commission Report into the proposed Railton to Wilmot Railway.¹⁹⁷

Despite the public's predilection for mineral finds, a few realised that a detailed geological knowledge was necessary to underpin and make more efficient the prospecting phase. Thus the majority of government reports on route finding mentioned either minerals or the geological structure of the area. RM Johnston's *Geology of Tasmania*, 1888, was a bold and successful attempt to collate all then-known aspects of the subject. Some delved deeper than the phases of geological

¹⁹⁵For details see T Jetson, *The Roof of Tasmania*, Launceston, 1989, pp. 47, 62-3

¹⁹⁶'Lake St Clair, Lake Echo, and the Great Lake Water Power: Report by KL Rahbek', *TPP*, 1901, No. 29, pp 3-7 & 'River Gaugings and Examination of Lakes', *TPP*, 1901, No 30, pp. 8-9

¹⁹⁷'Proposed Railton-Wilmot Railway', *TPP*, 1902, No. 59

structures seeking explanations for landscape formation. This intellectual voyage was based on the relatively new science of glaciology and personal observation of the physical landscape. Gould was the first in 1860, while W R Bell and CP Sprent's observations have been noted earlier in this chapter. As in all fields of human endeavour, Johnston also was active in field work having traversed the south-west with Scott and Piguénit, the northern high country from Middlesex to Bischoff and accompanying the Hobartian's 'Walk to the West'.

Although occurring earlier, discussion accelerated in 1893 with Johnston, EJ Dunn, TB Moore and Montgomery all expressing their views through the Royal Society. On the general features with which we are concerned, there was broad agreement despite differences on specific evidence and processes. Thus on the western fringes of the Central Plateau glacial activity was apparent. For Johnston it was necessary to develop a theoretical case for glaciation as well as presenting evidence.¹⁹⁸ Physical signs such as roches moutonnées, abraded tarns and lakes, large ice-born erratics, rock surfaces either polished or striated and deep vallies were abundant throughout western and central Tasmania including The Reserve. Montgomery postulated that the vast greenstone (ie dolerite) Central Plateau previously extended much further to encompass peaks in The Reserve and further west. Ice action played a key role in separating these individual peaks and ranges with pre-existing vallies much enlarged and deepened by glacial action.¹⁹⁹ Montgomery referred to evidence from the Barn Bluff-Pelion area, while Johnston's eye cast further south to the headwaters of the Franklin. Both appreciated the beauty of glacial landscapes. If Montgomery was an aesthete, the tarns made the 'whole of the scenery of this part of the country most beautiful', then Johnston was a scientific aesthetic believing 'No one, however ignorant of glacial action' could gaze at Lake Dixon

¹⁹⁸RM Johnston, 'The Glacier Epoch of Australasia', pp. 73-134 in *PPRST* 1893, pp. 94-5 for pre-requisites, evidence pp. 95-102 & theories, pp. 103-131

¹⁹⁹A Montgomery, 'Glacial Action in Tasmania', *PPRST* 1893, pp. 160-1

without being impressed that its attractiveness was 'produced by the slow rasping flow of an ancient river of ice.'²⁰⁰ Montgomery reflected on the theoretical such as period and duration of activity, links with northern hemisphere glaciation and overall causes. Both concurred that the island's lowlands were immune from glaciation, a view from which Moore dissented the following year.²⁰¹

In 1916, a Melbourne University party, including Professor Baldwin Spencer, better known as an anthropologist, and Graham Officer, visited the 'queen of Tasmanian Lakes', with the latter's findings appearing in the Royal Society papers.²⁰² From the west the party climbed Olympus, whose summit resembled that of Mt Wellington,²⁰³ and reached part way up Ida. Both the Cuvier Valley and the plateau east from Ida resembled Scottish moorlands.²⁰⁴ Officer hypothesised and purportedly discovered evidence that the greenstone was newer than the sandstone. Despite the flurry of papers about glaciation a year earlier, Officer found no signs of ice action nor of basalt at the mouth of the Derwent as Johnston claimed.²⁰⁵ Ever ready to defend his reputation, Johnston exposed the limitations of Officer's paper,²⁰⁶ opining that like many a young Turk, Officer's ignorance of the past was the key. In particular, Johnston criticised Officer's unawareness of the work of Gould, who Johnston declared was a 'much-undervalued observer'.²⁰⁷ Johnston asserted that St Clair's geological features were typical of the much larger surrounding greenstone mountains and plateaux. Furthermore, a real reputation

²⁰⁰Montgomery, 'Glacial Action in Tasmania', p. 163, Johnston, 'The Glacier Epoch of Australasia', p. 97

²⁰¹Montgomery, 'Glacial Action in Tasmania', pp 167-9, Johnston, 'The Glacier Epoch of Australasia', p. 100, TB Moore, 'Notes on Further Proof of Glaciation at Low levels', pp. 73-7 in *PPRST* 1894-5

²⁰²G Officer, 'The Geology of the Lake St Clair District, Tasmania', *PPRST* 1893, pp. 150-9

²⁰³Officer, 'The Geology of the Lake St Clair District', p. 153

²⁰⁴Officer, 'The Geology of the Lake St Clair District', pp. 152-3

²⁰⁵Officer, 'The Geology of the Lake St Clair District', p. 157

²⁰⁶RM Johnston, 'Notes on the Geology of Lake St Clair & immediate neighbourhood', *PPRST* 1893, pp. 135-146

²⁰⁷Johnston, 'Notes on the Geology of Lake St Clair', p. 136

could be gained from the high country west of Mt Byron which offered 'a fairly complete glimpse of the grand range and sequence of the varied and interesting geological formations of the Western Highlands of Tasmania'.²⁰⁸

The pre-eminent natural scientist of colonial Australia, Baron von Mueller considered it unlikely that there would be significant discoveries in Tasmanian flora and fauna because of the outstanding work of such men as RC Gunn and Dr Milligan (see Chapter 3). Yet there still remained hopes for researchers in The Reserve. Von Mueller asserted that those who ventured into 'new mountain recesses, or may follow the recent tracks of miners'²⁰⁹ would increase knowledge of these areas and may find rare species. As well, mosses, lichens and fungi abound in the moist recesses of the mountains, and many a hidden form of these plants awaits still the elucidation of a phytographer'.²¹⁰ Indeed they did, with Dr Geoff Bratt making the first major study of lichens in 1976.²¹¹

Although there had long been an appreciation of the tourist potential of St Clair, a similar view of the Northern Reserve was relatively new.²¹² As yet they were just hints such as the advertisement of Barn Bluff and Pelion as 'camping-out expeditions'.²¹³ Seeing 'nature in still wilder form' offered hunting 'where game is plentiful, and the only habitations are a few mining camps'.²¹⁴ Full development of the Cradle country awaited the passage of time. Before examining the situation at

²⁰⁸Johnston, 'Notes on the Geology of Lake St Clair', p. 140

²⁰⁹F von Mueller, 'A glance on the plants of Tasmania' pp 94-99 in Thomas, *A guide for excursionists*, p. 95

²¹⁰von Mueller, 'A glance on the plants of Tasmania', p. 95

²¹¹G Bratt, 'Lichens of the Cradle Mountain area', pp. 111-18 in *Tasmanian Tramp* No 22 1976

²¹²*Union Steamship Guide to Tasmania*, 1887, p. 78 contained details of possible itinerary and gear to take and when to visit and 1890, pp. 73-5 contains similar information, although scientific knowledge was not necessarily up-to-date as the *Guide* claimed that Lake St Clair was formed by volcanic activity damming the valley between Olympus and Ida.

²¹³Tasmanian Railway Department, *A short guide to the North Western and North Eastern Districts*, Hobart, 1902, p. 5

²¹⁴*A short guide to the North Western and North Eastern Districts*, p. 5

Lake St Clair it is pertinent to consider a broader picture. From the late 1860s Central Plateau lakes were progressively stocked with trout²¹⁵ and by the 1880s Tasmania was promoted as an 'anglers paradise'. Governor Hamilton's catch of a 28 lb trout in the Huon River in the 1880s boosted this reputation. Anglers were fishing waters ever closer to St Clair.

In 1893 Premier Dobson was instrumental in founding the Hobart-based Tasmanian Tourist Association (TTA) which aimed

to protect the colony's beauty spots from alienation and vandalism; to make them more accessible by better roads and general means of communication ... to advertise the colony and attract settlers and tourists.²¹⁶

There had been many earlier attempts to encourage tourism by local associations such as the Launceston based City and Suburban Improvement Association, 1889,²¹⁷ and by shipping companies such as Huddart Parker and Union Steamship, but this was the first concerted effort. In 1894 the TTA secured an agency of the world-renowned Thomas Cook under the aegis of the Railway Department.²¹⁸ With Cook's poster displays, some derived from Beattie's photographs, in England, perhaps Lake St Clair was beginning to forge an international tourist reputation. The TTA believed that until governments improved access to the Plateau lakes and St Clair, and provided accommodation, further promotion was futile. In 1893 the Dobson government provided £300 for infrastructure which by the following year consisted of two accommodation houses,

²¹⁵For details of stocking see Jetson, *The Roof of Tasmania*, pp. 63-4

²¹⁶*Mercury* supplement 30 December 1893 & JG Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', PhD, Australian National University, 1963, p. 23; for background to TTA see C Morris, 'In pursuit of the travelling man: a study of Tasmanian tourism to 1905', BA Hons(Hist) University of Tasmania, 1993, pp. 23-25, see also *Tasmanian Mail* 24 June 1893

²¹⁷Morris, 'In pursuit of the travelling man', pp. 18-24

²¹⁸For the visit of their agent Mr Harrison and Cook's aims see *Tasmanian Mail* 1 July 1893

boat shed and boat, stable and enclosed horse paddock.²¹⁹ This met with the full approbation of the TTA. In late 1896 Lands and Works Minister Pillinger transferred all infrastructure to the TTA who were authorised to charge the public for use.²²⁰ Unable to pay rent, the TTA relinquished control four years later to the Braddon government. This ministry in 1899 commissioned the popular 'Scenery' or 'Pictorial Stamp' series which were modelled in part on a similar New Zealand series the previous year. The Reserve gained tremendous publicity from Beattie's 'Lake Marion' and 'Mt Gould/Lake St Clair'.²²¹

Evidence to the 1907 Select Committee into the Great Western Railway revealed the state of tourism at Lake St Clair.²²² The Great Western Company proposed a branch from the King Williams to St Clair. Accompanying his account of an enjoyable lakeside holiday, Sir Elliott Lewis, Counsel for the Great Western Syndicate, provided photographs of the route and the Lake. He explained that the poor condition of the road had forced Ellis of Dee Bridge to abandon his passenger service to the Lake three years earlier.²²³ Lewis extolled the virtues of this 'ideal tourist resort' averring that 'there is no more beautiful spot in the whole of Australia' with 'many interesting walks to be had'.²²⁴ Civil engineer and company director Montagu Rhys-Jones and PS Seager, chairman of the Tasmanian Tourist Association, concurred, with the latter opining that 'not many' visited because of inaccessibility. In typical boosterism, Seager attributed increasing visitor numbers

²¹⁹MW Simmons, 'Westward Ho! the experiences of a Hobart Tourist party', *Tasmanian Mail* 21 November 1897 claims that the new accommodation house was an improvement on the old one. The House was locked and the key remained with the caretaker, the Pearces of Clarence River.

²²⁰HG 5 January 1897

²²¹M Walker, 'Pictorial Stamps', A Alexander, (ed) *The Companion to Tasmanian History*, Hobart, 2005, p. 275

²²²'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill, 1907 (Private): Report of Select Committee', *TPP*, 1907, No. 20 The Great Western Railway and Electric Ore Reduction Company Act, No. 3' 63 Vict No 71

²²³'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill', p. 7; *ZDH* 27 September 1900; previous attempts, such as JJ Gaffney's petition for the Ouse-Derwent Bridge road to be regarded as a main road had not succeeded

²²⁴'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill', p. 7

to the state to his association 'developing the accessibility of the beauty spots' but did not specify its contribution to St Clair.²²⁵ As clerk for Cook's Tourist Agency, William Horne provided specific facts. To reach the Lake, Horne related how access involved a train to Macquarie Plains, coach to Ouse, vehicle to Dee Bridge and then Ellis charged £5 per head for a minimum of three to St Clair. In addition a second vehicle was necessary for luggage and provisions. Thus many could spare neither the time, a minimum of three days, nor afford the expense. A railway would be valuable but it would 'be like building a house at the roof' as lake accommodation was a pre-requisite.²²⁶ Counsel revealed that, despite preventing land from being purchased, the half mile reserve around St Clair permitted construction of hotel or boarding-house.²²⁷

Despite the growing popularity of photography of wild places, there remained a more widespread general interest in painting. The Tasmanian Exhibition of 1892 contained several pictures of the Southern Reserve. There was a detailed coverage of Piquenit's 'Mount Byron':

The bold bluff standing out so prominently with its rugged time worn face half hidden by the fleecy clouds that sail across the lake at the base with the brightening purpling hues of the morning sun lighting up the whole scene, make it a striking picture.²²⁸

Of the amateurs, Mrs CG Grey's 'Lake St Clair' was noteworthy. In contrast, the absence of portrayals of the northern Reserve reflected its relative inaccessibility.

Conclusion

During this period of route wars public awareness of and interest in The Reserve had expanded. Apart from an occasional visitor to Lake St Clair and graziers

²²⁵'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill', For Rhys-Jones pp. 11-12 & Seager p. 1 & for those at St Clair see *ZDH* 10 March 1896 for Treasurer PO Fysh's visit

²²⁶'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill', pp. 16-17

²²⁷'The Great Western Railway and Electric Power Bill', p. 18

²²⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 26 March 1892

depasturing stock around the southern boundary, the Reserve had been a stepping stone to western and south-western exploration. By 1907 tourism in the south was increasing with continued government expenditure on access and accommodation while occasional visitors reached Cradle. It was only the well-to-do, however, who could afford the time and cost of extended periods in the wild. In nearly all cases walkers were accompanied by local guides, as a form of insurance against potential dangers, at times fatal, which confronted visitors to the area. In 1900 prospectors CP Smith and T Cook were five days snowbound in their tent near Barn Bluff before the former nearly drowned in a river crossing²²⁹ John Larkins died of hypothermia near Mt Arrowsmith in snow drifts 6-10 feet thick with his mates, Ebdon and Hanney, barely surviving.²³⁰ However, greater coverage was given to the death of snarer Bert Hanson near Cradle Mt in 1905, which is to be further discussed in Chapter 7.²³¹ Most concurred that The Reserve had long term tourist potential, with disagreement over the role of government and private enterprise in funding development. Pastoralism continued in the south, while in the north, some wild stock had encroached onto Pelion Plains. Hunter-snarers became more prominent, despite a general reputation for being almost beyond the pale. While mining had been the growth activity, especially between Barn Bluff and Pelion,²³² the general consensus was that long term future depended on appropriate access.

Artist-photographers such as Piguénit, Beattie and Spurling, newspaper accounts and guide books, tourist and Crown Lands, brought the area into the public domain. The impact and importance of visual representation should never be underestimated. JR Scott's comments about the south-west were applicable to The Reserve. He maintained that

²²⁹ZDH 22 May 1900

²³⁰ZDH 28 August 1900

²³¹*Examiner* 12 September 1905 for Hanson

²³²'For there is a great future in store for that part of Tasmanian [ie Pelion]' see *Examiner* 24 March 1898

It is almost impossible to describe the scenery around Port Davey to one accustomed only to settled portions of Tasmania, while the grand scenery such as Hell's Gates, must be seen to be realised. Written landscapes leave no picture in the mind of a stranger.²³³

This was especially true when photographs appeared in the *Weekly Courier* and *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*.²³⁴ Many politicians and senior bureaucrats visited the area while investigating transport links. With the improvement of the Strahan Harbour and a rail link from Queenstown to Emu Bay, the route wars apparently had ceased. However, there was always a possibility that the rise of a major field in the west could ignite another round of disputes. The future of an increasingly accessible Reserve seemed to involve a combination of mining and tourism, with walking a vital component of the latter. Awareness and acceptance of the state's wild landscapes, — rivers, lakes, caves and mountains — remained the province of the upper middle class. Thoughts that the area would become a designated scenic reserve were not uppermost in minds of those who knew the country in part because mining and tourism were not seen as incompatible.

Despite all this activity, topographical knowledge of the Central Reserve was still sketchy. A central corridor from Pelion Plains south to the northern end of St Clair and the associated eastern boundary were unknown, at least to official cartographers. Major northward flowing rivers, the Mersey and Forth had not been traced to their source, while nomenclature for the westward flowing Murchison-Canning-Pieman system was confused. A mixture of local and official names for the mountains on the southern fringes of Pelion Plains further bewildered.²³⁵

²³³Scott, 'Port Davey in 1875', p. 96

²³⁴For example for Spurling see *Weekly Courier*, 20 & 27 May & 3 June 1905

²³⁵'Local Government Boundaries Map' in *TPP*, 1907, No. 24

CHAPTER FIVE
TOWARDS A SCENIC RESERVE
1907-1922

This reservation ... taking in some of Tasmania's most beautiful lakes and mountain ranges ... was unsuitable for any agricultural or pastoral purposes. ET Emmett Director of the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau, 1921¹

With the failure of the Great Western Railway proposal, the destiny of The Reserve continued to be problematic. Grazing in the south, pining and mining in the north, and a minority interested in recreational walking appeared to be the only significant activities that would persist. Hopes of a major mineral field and burgeoning of the nascent tourism industry were the most promising catalysts of change. Despite parochialism, there were hopes that the centralised organisation of tourism would assist the evolution of the latter. Two portents seemed favourable. Some areas of notable beauty had been set aside as reserves, or on the mainland and overseas, as national parks. Beattie's and Spurling's lantern lectures and photographs, especially those in the *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail and Weekly Courier*, had aroused public interest in wild places.

As seen in the Introduction, conventional accounts maintain that this pattern of quiescence continued until the summer of 1910-1911 when the Weindorfers, Gustav and Kate, Major Smith and Walter Malcolm Black ascended Cradle Mountain. From the summit, on the fourth of January 1910, Weindorfer supposedly declared that 'This must be a National Park for the people for all time. It is magnificent, and people must know about it and enjoy it.'² With private land acquisition, the construction of Waldheim and improved access, Cradle Mountain rivalled Lake St Clair as a tourist destination. This chapter describes the chain of

¹*Mercury* 26 July 1921

²*Advocate* 4 November 1936

events which culminated in Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair becoming a Scenic Reserve. To understand these developments it is necessary to examine the evolution of the national park idea in North America, New Zealand and Australia. This chapter also delves behind the myth of Gustav Weindorfer as 'Father of the Reserve'. While Cradle Mt sits on centre stage, there was considerable activity in the remainder of The Reserve.

The Park motive

The idea of setting aside land in the form of gardens or parks is almost as old as human civilisation. Several historians, including Bardwell,³ Runte⁴ and Haines,⁵ have traced the origin of modern national parks to the hanging gardens of Babylon and the Persian royal gardens. From here Alexander the Great spread this idea to the Greeks and later the Romans partly democratised the notion by having small courtyards as miniatures of the gardens of Roman villas. Subsequently, the Norman parcs in France maintained the idea but for royalty and nobility. After 1066 in England the Norman lords converted many commons into deer parks, while villagers retained some areas, usually waste lands, for traditional customary use. The merging of game reserves for gentlemen's hunting and common lands into national parks happened not in England but across the Atlantic. As with many transplants, modifications occurred and in North America they became recreational areas and training grounds for militia.

There matters may have remained but for fundamental changes in man's attitudes to, and his place within, Nature. Fundamental challenges to the dominant

³S Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria, 1866 to 1956: "For all the people for all the time"', PhD (Hist) Monash University, 1974, Ch 1 Interpretation of National Park concept

⁴A Runte, *National Parks The American experience*, 2nd edit revis Lincoln, Nebraska, 1987, pp. 2-3

⁵A Haines, *The Yellowstone story: a history of our first national park*, Vol. I, Yellowstone, Wyoming, 1977, pp. 156-60

anthropocentric outlook of Western civilisation resulted in a new world view, especially in attitudes to wild landscapes and mountains.⁶ English landscape parks, which had replaced the Renaissance Gardens, were in turn superseded by public parks, botanical gardens and health resorts.⁷ Landscape artists, the Hudson River school of the 1820s and 1830s for the East and the Rocky Mountain group with its portrayal of the West from the late 1850s, helped Americans appreciate their landscape and stimulated the desire to visit scenic places. An abundance of waste lands containing natural wonders or monuments of nature, economic prosperity, introduction of railways and growth in outdoor recreation⁸ helped pave the way for national parks. Nascent tourism industries and a small but significant group of preservationists completed the picture.

In 19th century United States belief in natural resource abundance⁹ combined with religious beliefs, especially amongst Puritans, and primeval fears of the new wilderness and desire to subjugate nature, to produce dominant materialist attitudes.¹⁰ This somewhat simplistic view forgets that the land, having been modified over aeons by Indians, was not a wilderness.¹¹ For the majority, surviving and then achieving permanent prosperity were life goals. The renowned French observer Alexis de Tocqueville noted that the pioneer 'only prizes the work of man ... But that one should appreciate great trees and the beauties of solitude, that possibility completely passes him by.'¹² In general, aesthetic concerns were the province of affluent Easterners increasingly insulated from the vagaries of nature.¹³

⁶H Huth, *Nature and the American: three centuries of changing attitudes*, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1990, pp. 6-7 illustrates evolving attitudes in America, passim but especially pp. 14-53

⁷Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', p. 62

⁸Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 54-70

⁹C Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, Westport, Connecticut, 1982, p. 12

¹⁰R Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, rev edit pp. 1-43

¹¹RP Sellars *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History*, Yale, 1997 p. 23 makes this point.

¹²Quoted in Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 13

¹³Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 24 gives a modern version: 'Preservation, like fine art, is a luxury. Neither is possible unless the conomy generates surpluses'.

Historians, Huth and Nash, explain how scientists, philosophers and travellers, and later artists and writers, contributed to a growing appreciation of Eastern monuments of nature such as Niagara Falls, the Adirondacks and the Catskill Mts. Initially individuals couched ideas in conventional Romantic terms. Then some, such as artist Thomas Cole, tried to redress feelings of cultural inferiority compared with Europe's cathedrals and ruins by asserting the intrinsic worth of the landscape. Assumptions that the fear of wilderness and environmental appreciation were mutually exclusive phases is erroneous because they co-existed in individuals and periods of history.¹⁴ Artist George Catlin, through frequent travels to the West, became aware of the need for preserving land from the advance of civilisation. In 1832 he wanted, 'A nation's Park, containing man and beast [Indians and buffaloes], in all the wild freshness of their nature's beauty!' for posterity. This would be best achieved by 'some great protecting policy of government.'¹⁵ Unlike the Puritans, Transcendentalists saw that wilderness offered hope of spiritual regeneration and liberation.¹⁶ Thoreau's epigram 'in wildness is the preservation of the world' exemplifies this view.¹⁷ Throughout the 1850s he repeated Catlin's idea asserting that there must be a 'certain sample of wild nature, a certain primitiveness' for 'inspiration and recreation'¹⁸ but the milieu was unfavorable. As also in Britain, others sought solutions in rehabilitation of urban areas. In 1851 the creation of Central Park in New York took the park ideal to a new stage but simultaneously precluded many residents through its location on the city's periphery.¹⁹

¹⁴Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, pp. 44-66 describes this first phase while the American version is depicted in pp. 67-83; Huth, *Nature and the American*, for travellers to eastern monuments of nature see pp. 71-86 & for artists such as Cole pp. 43-51

¹⁵Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, p. 35 & Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 15

¹⁶Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 87-104 provides an illuminating account of their influence

¹⁷Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol 1, p. 160

¹⁸Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, pp. 102-3

¹⁹Wright & Mattson, 'The origin and Purpose of National Parks and Protected Areas', p. 7; Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation*, p. 3; Runte, *National Parks*, p. 4, & Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 69-70

Runte describes attempt to regain some moral ground after savage attacks on the commercialisation of Niagara Falls from the 1830s.²⁰ With the East lacking monuments of nature and history, westward expansion offered redemption. Here 'monumental scenery', mountains not merely rivalling but exceeding Switzerland's, canyons, geysers, waterfalls and giant trees such as the Sequoias, became the symbols of New World supremacy over the effete Old World.²¹ Frequent comparisons by early visitors with European natural wonders indicated cultural insecurity.²² Increasing personal wealth and leisure time for the upper middle classes and rapid urbanisation with its supposed deleterious effect on health contributed to the growth of outdoor recreation.

Throughout history, primacy of discovery and ideas is often controversial with several individuals arriving at the same conclusion almost concurrently. The development of parks illustrates this point. Usually a frontiersman or explorer provided descriptions of natural features of outstanding beauty. Curious individuals followed, with some publishing accounts. Some enquirers discerned commercial opportunities by providing transport, accommodation or guiding services, where others saw only aesthetic beauty. Traditional landscape artists and photographers combined both motives and their works were vital in ensuing campaigns to reserve land. With the well-to-do already accustomed to 'summer migrations' in the east,²³ railway companies and others sought new opportunities arising from western discoveries.²⁴ In the second half of the 19th century, a conservation movement rose to prominence, initially with greater influence in forestry²⁵ than national parks.

²⁰Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 5-7

²¹Huth challenges this simplistic view in *Nature and the American*, pp. 11-12, 14-19

²²Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 19-22

²³Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 105-128

²⁴Huth, *Nature and the American*, pp. 129-47 & 148-164 for general western travels & Yosemite and Yellowstone respectively

²⁵D Zaslow & TH Watkins, *These American Lands: Parks, Wilderness and the Public Lands*, Washington, DC, 1994, pp. 60-71 describe evolving attitudes to American forests

Influential environmental historian R Nash, has identified three disparate, but not mutually exclusive strands of conservation — utilitarian, ecological and aesthetic. The first mentioned is often labelled conservation and the other two, preservationist. GP Marsh and forester Gifford Pinchot are key utilitarian figures with the latter being the exemplar of what SP Hays has labelled the Gospel of Efficiency. Their apogee was the TD Roosevelt-Gifford Pinchot era when the belief that rationalising the exploitation of resources in the public domain dovetailed with the Progressive movement's centralising principles.²⁶ Nash uses the indigenous Indians and Aldo Leopold to represent the ecological strand which was to become influential in the 20th century. More important for the preservationists were HD Thoreau and John Muir who can simplistically be regarded as intellectual father and publiciser respectively of the movement.²⁷

Before examining the creation of the Yosemite and Yellowstone Parks an important caveat must be made. Many historians overemphasise the writings of Emerson and Thoreau because of the subsequent importance of preservation of wild places as the *raison d'être* of parks. Runte, however, stresses newspapers' importance in disseminating information. Horace Greeley and Albert Richardson, respectively owner-editor and correspondent of the *New York Tribune* and Samuel Bowles, publisher-editor *Springfield (Mass) Republica* were mighty popularisers of the west. Bowles suggested it would be patriotic to preserve areas of national significance such as Niagara Falls and Adirondacks.²⁸ GP Marsh's internationally influential *Man and Nature*, 1864, made many aware of the disruptive nature of

²⁶SP Hays, *Conservation and the gospel of efficiency: the progressive conservation movement, 1890-1920*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1959. See also J Penick, *Progressive politics and Conservation: the Ballinger-Pinchot affair*, Chicago, 1968; M McGeary, *Gifford Pinchot: forester politician*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1960, pp. 86-7 for a discussion of the term 'conservation'.

²⁷Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', p. 88; Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, pp. 84-95 for Thoreau & pp. 122-140 for Muir

²⁸Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 26 & Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 12-3. The *Tribune* had a national circulation of 290,000 in the 1860s

man's activities, notably forestry and the need for responsible use of dwindling natural resources.²⁹ Marsh argued economically and scientifically for preservation of the Adirondacks as well as for the need to preserve some large accessible area 'as far as possible, in its primitive condition.'³⁰

Many of these features can be seen in Yosemite's history. The Ahwahneeche, a subtribe of the Sierra Miwok, resided in Yosemite before and during the first phase of European visitors.³¹ Then followed the typical pattern of hunters and explorers, government and private,³² entrepreneurs, such as San Franciscan JM Hutchings,³³ and landscape artists and photographers, especially Albert Bierstadt and Eadweard Muybridge.³⁴ Fatherhood of the Park can be attributed to shipping magnate Israel Raymond who urged Californian senator John Conness to secure the Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Tree Groves of giant sequoias for California. In the ensuing campaign the 'worthless lands' argument was used extensively: Frederick Olmsted, designer of New York's Central Park, claimed that it was a 'wild park created without human intervention'.³⁵ Conness' avowal that despite this worthlessness, Yosemite contained 'perhaps, some of the greatest wonders in the world'.³⁶ Carleton E Watkins' photos were used to great effect and President Abraham Lincoln signed

²⁹CM Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage, Preserving Australia's Wilderness*, Melbourne, 1992, p. 89; for the suggestion that Marsh's ideas were known to those responsible for Yosemite in Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 26-7

³⁰Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 26 & GP Marsh, *Man and Nature*, (Ed) D Lowenthal, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1965, p. 235

³¹M Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery, Its Wonders, and Its People*, New York, 1981, pp. 16-32

³²Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, p. 8 for hunter JR Walker who in 1833 showed that aesthetic and utilitarian attitudes were not incompatible, pp. 3-9

³³Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, pp. 78-101 for hotelier, author and guide Hutchings whose publications *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity*, 1861, *1877 Yosemite Guide Book* and *In the heart of the Sierras*, 1884, were influential. Another claim to fame stems from his employment of John Muir as shepherd, handyman and sawyer

³⁴Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, pp. 166-172 for Bierstadt and pp. 173-183 for Muybridge

³⁵Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, p. 11

³⁶Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, p. 68

legislation in June 1864 which granted the lands 'which shall be inalienable for all time' for 'public use, resort and recreation'.³⁷

Then problems arose from the Californian government failed to authorise adequate funding and park regulations outlawed previously legal occupation and activities.³⁸ In the history of each park, one individual is accorded almost heroic status. Scottish-born John Muir occupied this niche in Yosemite through longevity of association, numerous publications and campaigns to save the Park. In his conflicts with the Californian government and commercial interests, Muir established the Sierra Club, 1892,³⁹ which subsequently elevated him to wilderness sainthood. Despite the land being returned to Federal control in 1905,⁴⁰ he lost the long running battle over damming the Hetch Hetchy Valley.⁴¹ Muir's tirade against opponents as

Those temple destroyers, devotees of raging commercialism, seem to have a perfect contempt for Nature, and, instead of lifting their eyes to almighty God of the Mountains, lift them up to the Almighty Dollar.⁴²

was indicative of the campaign's bitterness. The conservation movement's split into Pinchot's wise-use advocates and Muirites or preservationists overshadowed the loss of Hetch-Hetchy valley.

Numerous tribes frequented pre-European Yellowstone and by the 19th century the Piegans, a Blackfoot band, the Crows and the Sheepeaters, a band of the Shoshonies, lived in and around the Yellowstone area.⁴³ Indians unsuccessfully

³⁷Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, p. 99 & for Watkins pp. 158-165; for Runte's account, *National Parks*, pp. 28-9

³⁸Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, p. 100

³⁹Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, p. 231

⁴⁰Sanbon, *Yosemite Its Discovery*, pp. 230-2, 235-6 & 239 & Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 39-40

⁴¹Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 44-48 & Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 84-92

⁴²Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, p. 65

⁴³Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 15-34 passim

resisted Europeans but not before the Nez Perce caused temporary panic.⁴⁴ Accounts of Virginian frontiersman John Colter, a former member of the famed Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1806-7, and Joe Meeks' description that the 'the whole country beyond was smoking with the vapor from boiling springs ...'⁴⁵ were regarded as embellishments of the truth.⁴⁶ The area was generally ignored because of pre-occupation with westward migration and difficult access. The gold miners, 'pick and shovel pilgrims',⁴⁷ who frequented Yellowstone from the late 1840s were transients whose reports, like the fur hunters', tantalised readers and encouraged further exploration. Most were indifferent to scenery or as Osborne Russell, Maine farmboy and hunter, noted: 'as to the beauty of nature or arts, it was all a "humbug"'.⁴⁸

Between 1804 and 1870 there were 110 scientific expeditions west of the Mississippi, but not until 1859 was there one to Yellowstone and that was halted by the civil war.⁴⁹ Not all officials were indifferent. In 1865, after hearing of Yellowstone's attractions, Acting Montana Governor TF Meagher, Young Irelander and one time visitor to Tasmania's Lakes District, declared that if true 'the government ought to reserve the territory for a national park'.⁵⁰ Yellowstone's paternity is disputed. Quakers David Folsom and Charles Cook and ex-seaman William Peterson in 1865⁵¹ and five years later, Cornelius Hedges and NP Langford, promoter for the Northern Pacific Railway and subsequently the Park's first superintendent,⁵² have claims to park fatherhood. Northern Pacific supported

⁴⁴Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 70-1

⁴⁵Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 35-6 & 43

⁴⁶For similar views see Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 27

⁴⁷Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 60, the quote is the Chapter 4 heading

⁴⁸Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 50-1

⁴⁹Wright & Mattson, 'The Origin and Purpose of National Parks and Protected Areas', p. 8

⁵⁰Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 90

⁵¹For biographical details see Haines, *The Yellowstone story*: Vol. II, pp. 448-9

⁵²Haines debunks this account, Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 129-30 & 138. For biographical details see Vol II, pp. 430-38, Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 35-6, 41-2 deals with these

the national park concept believing their branch line to Yellowstone would provide a lucrative monopoly. They sponsored Langford's promotional tour, and underwrote artist Thomas Moran's expenses.⁵³ The ensuing continent-wide publicity inspired Judge William Kelley to suggest that Congress should 'pass a bill reserving the Great Geyser Basin as a public park forever — just as it has reserved that far inferior wonder the Yosemite valley and big trees'.⁵⁴ Thus inspired, Hayden set about converting the proposal into reality.

The campaign was brief and attracted minimal public attention. As Yellowstone encompassed parts of Montana and Wyoming, Congress was reluctant to grant land to either. Jackson's photos and Moran's paintings were influential.⁵⁵ To facilitate passage of the Organic Act, Hayden guaranteed that no appropriations would be sought for several years. Like Yosemite, Yellowstone was 'set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people'. The Act provided for the 'preservation, from injury or spoilation, of all the timber, mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders within said park, and their retention in their natural condition'.⁵⁶ Thus eight years after Yosemite's creation, United States's first national park was created on 1 March 1872. That Congress debate was limited is puzzling, when one considers that reserving land ran against the trend to divest territory to railways, to settlers through the Homestead Act, 1862, and to ex-military

claims and arrives at similar verdict; he also believes that motives were more important than the 'when' and 'who' of Yellowstone

⁵³For Dr Frederick Hayden's Geological and Geographical Survey of 1871 and results see Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 138-153; for biographical details see Vol II, pp. 438- 441 & Sellars *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, p. 9

⁵⁴Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 155

⁵⁵Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, pp. 166-72 & Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 41-47

⁵⁶Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 172. For The Organic Act to 'set apart a certain Tract of Land lying near the Head-waters of the Yellowstone River as a public Park' see Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, pp. 471-2; Both Acts permitted leases not exceeding ten years for building purposes and and revenue thus derived was to be used on road works, and in the case of Yosemite, for the 'preservation and improvement of the property', Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 167

and timber interests.⁵⁷ Perhaps the Yosemite example and belief that tourism growth would contribute more than other land uses suffice as explanation. The absence of specific mention for wildlife is a marked contrast with subsequent national park history.

After 1872 the Yellowstone pattern reflected Yosemite. Government apathy was mirrored by the indifference from local towns which stood to benefit from the Park. Insufficient finance, staff discontent, and an absence of any coherent long-term plan made this period a 'Paradise almost lost'.⁵⁸ Despite primitive accommodation, poor transport and facilities, the well-to-do, including international nobility, were generally impressed. After much bad press, authorities decided to instal Company M, First United States Cavalry as administrators. They rescued the park from a deepening spiral of chaos, managing with tact and efficiency until an almost seamless transition to civilian rule with the promulgation of the National Parks Act of 1916.⁵⁹

Other threats to the Park such as railway companies attempted monopoly of transport and accommodation and boundary amendments were vanquished.⁶⁰ A decade long campaign for wildlife protection, even bears and elk, culminated in the successful Lacey Act of 1894.⁶¹ Other developments encouraged middle class visitors. Stagecoach tours for the wealthy were complemented by the Wylie Way, a

⁵⁷Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 18-24 & Zaslowsky & Watkins *These American Lands: Parks*, pp. 109-111

⁵⁸Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. I, p. 177, is the title of Part II pp. 177-328

⁵⁹Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch 16 Fort Yellowstone Idyll, pp. 160-208. In particular the Engineer Corp under Captain William Ludlow brought technical competence and professionalism to road and bridge construction and maintenance Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch 17 The Work of the Corps, pp. 209-255.

⁶⁰Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch. 13 The Railroad Bogey, pp. 30-53 & Hayes Act p. 476 which thwarted the The Northern Pacific and Utah Railroad companies

⁶¹Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch. 14 The Yellowstone Crusade, pp. 54-99; for the Lacey Act 'to protect the birds and animals in Yellowstone National Act, and to punish crimes in said park, and for other purposes' see pp. 473-4

series of permanent camps,⁶² and the biking craze, stemming from Dunlop's pneumatic tyre in 1888 were two examples. The introduction of automobiles in 1897 increased numbers but posed different management problems which still resonate today.⁶³

As exemplified by its advocacy of a forestry commission, the American Association for the Advancement of Science was one of the few influential groups, big business aside, in discussions about preservation.⁶⁴ There were a few outdoor or mountain clubs but they lacked potency till after the formation of the Sierra Club.⁶⁵ In the setting aside of the Adirondacks in 1885 'forever ... as wild forest lands', preservation was not a key component. By 1894 the declaration that it was primarily a recreational and aesthetic area reflected changes in thinking about landscape preservation. Other moves contributed to this transformation. Following the 1890 census declaration that the frontier no longer existed, Giffard Pinchot's notion of wise use of resources, combined with American progressivism, found favour as the spirit of the age.⁶⁶ In the 1890s several national forest reserves were created, but whether for Pinchot-inspired conservation or preservation was unclear. Tension between the two wings simmered until the Hetch Hetchy debate brought matters to the boil.⁶⁷ More importantly, the 1906 Antiquities Act expanded the reasons for proclaiming a park to the archaeological and scientific. The president's unilateral power of proclamation, much used by Roosevelt, was limited by congress's power of revocation.⁶⁸

⁶²Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch. 15 On the Grand Tour especially pp. 134-140

⁶³Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, Ch. 18 The Coming of the Auto, pp. 256-278

⁶⁴Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 29-30

⁶⁵Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, p. 29

⁶⁶SP Hays, *Conservation and the gospel of efficiency*, for examples pp. 32-48

⁶⁷Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 79-81

⁶⁸Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 71-3

With growing awareness that Swiss and Canadian scenic resources generated substantial economic benefits, business interests demanded that America follow suit. Some feared that Canadian national parks would attract American visitors unless the problems of ramshackle and un-coordinated development were overcome. These parks' supporters wanted scenic areas preserved and developed for public enjoyment for economic benefits,⁶⁹ with spin-offs such as improvements in public health insignificant. Fortuitously there was a propitious intersection of concerned individuals: J Horace McFarland, horticulturalist, urban planner and 'city beautiful' leader; architect Frederick Olmsted junr son of the Yosemite advocate; Chicago businessman Stephen Mather and lawyer Horace Albright,⁷⁰ a sympathetic and active bureaucracy and business groups. Between 1910 and 1916 the Interior Department sponsored three national park conferences in which concerns such as general park administration and making a 'business of scenery' were subsumed under the need for a national park bureau.⁷¹ Some opposition came from the Forest Service, where Pinchot saw the new body as a rival, and western livestock interests, who believed current and future parks would curtail activities.

The next major step was the 1916 National Park Service Act which aimed at uniformity in park management. The new Department was to

promote and regulate the use of Federal areas known as national parks, monuments and reservations ... [whose] fundamental purpose ... is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.⁷²

The Act contained a fundamental incompatibility between conservation and use. In the absence of criteria for declaring an area a park, it was presumed that parks would

⁶⁹Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 82-105 generally

⁷⁰For biographical details see Haines, *The Yellowstone story*, Vol. II, pp. 458-9 for role in park affairs Runte, *National Parks*, pp. 86-92, 102-5

⁷¹This section is derived from Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, pp. 28-32

⁷²Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness preservation*, p. 49

contain grand monuments of nature rather than preserving areas of unique biological significance.⁷³ The absence of any definition of natural conditions and use of the term 'conserving' with its connotation of wise use rather than the Yellowstone 'preserving' were significant.⁷⁴

Thus the United States had provided an example to the world in setting aside areas of grand scenic beauty and creating a dedicated service to that purpose. While theoretically open to all people, reality dictated that many were unable or unwilling to visit the parks. The importance of tourism in creating and then exacerbating problems associated with parks cannot be underestimated. Despite being a source of national pride, parks were not pristine areas having been modified both by Indian and colonial land uses. There was no understanding that manipulation of wildlife species and introduction of exotic species were modifying the landscape. Similarly, there was ignorance of the pursuit of a fire suppression policy.⁷⁵ The Parks Service's struggle for survival during the first decades under Mather and then Allbright, provides many lessons applicable to Tasmanian parks' history.⁷⁶

Canada provided a similar, if not more tourism and recreation centred model, for creation of national parks than United States. In 1885 natural springs at Banff were reserved to encourage 'health tourism', and, as in the United States, railways, the Canadian Pacific Railway, (CPR) were significant in providing access and publicity.⁷⁷ This worthless area was to be so ordered and improved as to resemble

⁷³Wright & Mattson, 'The origin and Purpose of National Parks and Protected Areas', p. 10

⁷⁴Allin, *The politics of wilderness preservation*, pp. 48-50

⁷⁵Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, p. 23 for modification and p. 24 for fire policy.

⁷⁶Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, pp. 47-90 provides a fascinating account of this history. Zaslowky & Watkins, *These American Lands: Parks*, pp. 23-4 describes how Mather spent large sums from his personal fortune to ensure the future of national parks

⁷⁷RC Scace, 'Banff townsite: an historical-geographical view of the urban development in a Canadian national park', pp 203-219 in G Wall & J Marsh (eds), *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its Evolution in Canada*, Ottawa, 1982, CM Hall & J Shultis, 'Railways,

an English nobleman's estate.⁷⁸ By 1900 boundaries had been expanded dramatically with CPR to the fore as it was in the creation of Glacier National Park. Automobiles became more widespread after 1910 and, as was the case of USA, road networks were created within parks. Continuation of mining, forestry and hunting supports the contention that aesthetic and economics outweighed protection of nature in the creation of parks. These concerns resulted in the formation of a centralised body, the Dominion Parks Branch, and later the appointment of JB Harkins as Commissioner of National Parks in 1911. Running counter to the utilitarian trend evidenced in the Commission of Conservation in the early 1900s, Harkin was a devotee of the wilderness ideal and introduced animal protection measures.⁷⁹

The New Zealand experience was similar to Australia in that public sites were reserved for public use and pleasure. As with its trans-Tasman neighbour, issues about exploitation of forests⁸⁰ were catalysts for preservation of timber resources,⁸¹ and almost contemporaneously of marine species. There were similar debates about whether GP Marsh crystallised existing opinions, as expressed by amateur botanist Thomas Potts and Prime Minister Julius Vogel, or initiated new ideas. Also similar was awareness of the need for fauna reserves.⁸² Politicians, such as Premier William Fox,⁸³ tourism interests, especially the Union Steam Ship

Tourism and Worthless Lands: the establishment of National Parks in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States', *Australian-Canadian Studies*, Vol 8(2), 1991, pp. 57-74, at p. 64

⁷⁸Hall & Shultis, 'Railways, Tourism and Worthless Lands', p. 64

⁷⁹JG Nelson, 'Canada's national parks: past, present and future' in G Wall & J Marsh (eds), *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on its Evolution in Canada*, Ottawa, 1982, p. 47

⁸⁰G Wynn, 'Destruction under the guise of improvement? The Forest?' pp. 100-117 in E Pawson & T Brooking (eds) *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, Melbourne, 2002, pp. 112-116

⁸¹P Star, 'Native Forest and the rise of preservation in New Zealand, 1903-1913', *Environment and History*, Vol 8 (3), August 2002, pp. 275-294 passim

⁸²P Star & L Lochhead, 'Children of the burnt bush: New Zealanders and the indigenous remnant, 1880-1930', E Pawson & T Brooking (eds) *Environmental Histories of New Zealand*, pp. 121-2 & for GP Marsh influence see Wynn, 'Destruction under the guise of improvement?' pp. 111-116

⁸³Sir Joseph Ward, Minister of Tourism and Health, was instrumental in the 1903 Scenery Preservation Act, and was instrumental in the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts.

Company, urban-based scenery preservation societies, local communities as for Mt Egmont and scientific and acclimatisation societies played prominent roles in the scenery preservation campaigns. In 1874 Fox urged protection for the Rotororua thermal springs along the lines of the Yellowstone act. The area was preserved, but under general land acts provisions rather than specific scenery preservation laws.⁸⁴ There was a more concerted push than in Australia to protect scenic sites as tourist attractions, and recreational needs, notably mountaineering, were recognised.⁸⁵ The creation of the Department of Tourist and Health Resorts reflected government interest in profiting from scenery.

Circumstances leading to the first national park were remarkable. In 1887 Te Heuheu Tukino and other Tuwharetoa chiefs gave Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro, North Island volcanoes as a national park to the New Zealand nation. The area became the Tongariro National Park in 1894.⁸⁶ Conforming to the US model, the area was wasteland and tourism was likely to be far more profitable. Hall and Shultis suggest the primacy of political motives, citing dispute over ownership of the area and fears that Pakeha expansion threatened the sacred nature of the area.⁸⁷ Most parks such as Mt Egmont, 1900, were picturesque monuments of Nature which evoked comparisons with Swiss Alps.⁸⁸ Government support was translated into legislation.. The 1892 Land Act permitted setting aside of land for timber preservation, springs and natural curiosities; and for scenery of national interest or for popular recreation. More pertinent, the 1903 Scenery Preservation

⁸⁴Star & Lochhead, 'Children of the burnt bush', pp. 123-4. The 1885 Land Act protected mineral springs and 'natural curiosities' as reserves.

⁸⁵Star & Lochhead, 'Children of the burnt bush', p. 123 for Hooker Valley recreation reserve near Mt Cook in 1885

⁸⁶58° Vict. No 55 The Tongariro National Park Act, 1894

⁸⁷Hall & Shultis, 'Railways, Tourism and Worthless Lands', p. 66

⁸⁸K Cumberland & J Whitelaw, *The World's Landscapes: New Zealand*, London, 1970, pp. 53-4, 60, 64 & 81; G Blainey, 'Two Countries: the Same but Very Different' pp. 315-332 in K Sinclair (ed) *Tasman Relations New Zealand and Australia 1788-1988*, Auckland, 1988, pp. 321-23

Act⁸⁹ provided for lands to be 'permanently reserved as scenic, thermal, or historic reserves' and were to be fenced, preserved, and conserved intact as and for an inalienable patrimony of the people of New Zealand'. Reserves could be situated on Native, Crown or private lands. The Act specified regulations, sources of finance and method of administration.⁹⁰ There were other motives: the linking of preservation of 'monuments of nature' with national pride and for ecological impulses, with Leonard Cockayne to the forefront, were similar to developments in the States.⁹¹

National Parks in Australia

Recognition of possible 'wilderness' links between Aborigines and the landscape well begins an account of the evolution of Australian national parks. Aborigines endowed their landscape with myriad meanings, most of which were and still are incomprehensible to most Australians. R Brough-Smyth possibly found an Aborigine variation of the wilderness idea, echoing certain pre-Romantic views of the landscape in his example from the Victorian mountains. He described how

The mountain fastnesses, in winter covered with snow, and at times, in all seasons, shrouded in thick mists, were regarded with awe by the natives. Like the dark forests west of Mount Blackwood, they were held to be the abodes of evil spirits or of creatures — scarcely less to be dreaded — having the forms of men and the habits of beasts. It is certain that the blacks in the proper season occasionally visited the glens and ravines on both sides of the chain, but they did not live there. They visited them for the purpose of obtaining woods suitable for making weapons, feathers for ornament, birds and beats for food, and for the tree-fern, the heart of which is good to eat, and for other vegetable productions.⁹²

⁸⁹Star & Lochhead, 'Children of the burnt bush', p. 126

⁹⁰Cutting of timber and lighting of fires either in the reserve or on adjacent land were major offences. Consolidated Revenue supplied administration costs and special boards could be constituted to administer the areas. 3 Edw VII No 54, Scenery Preservation Act, 1903

⁹¹Star & Lochhead, 'Children of the burnt bush', pp. 131-2 for national pride and 128-30 for ecology

⁹²R Brough-Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria and Other Places of Australia and Tasmania*, Vol 1, Melbourne, 1878, pp. 33-4 cited in Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, p. 75

There is no way of ascertaining if Aborigines conceived of the Lake St Clair-Cradle Mt Reserve in this way.

Early settlers naturally took time to accustom themselves to a different, even somewhat alien, landscape. Reactions varied from attempts to recreate an Antipodean little England to positive appreciation, albeit couched in Romantic values and language. Much early literature and art, and introduction of flora and fauna reflected the former. Together with fears of bush, wildness was disparagement of beauty. Gradually as some began to appreciate the colonial landscape, the arts began to include Australian examples, even if set within an English framework. Geologist Rev WB Clarke and novelist Marcus Clarke's notions of landscape as a cathedral and the book of nature respectively indicate the influence of Romanticism.⁹³ The apotheosis of the bushman, the prominence of the Heidelberg School, and the *Bulletin* contributed to a fledgling nationalism which helped dispel lingering fears of the wildness of the bush.

In tracing development of parks and reserves, it is essential to examine the nature of and evolving attitudes to Crown land in colonial land acts. RV Wright in *The Bureaucrats' Domain* argues that emigrants to the Antipodes held the view that the propertyless were entitled to those resources necessary for survival. This notion was implicit in common lands which permitted the right to graze stock and to take wood. In New World colonies these commons were regarded as temporary expedients to facilitate settlement.⁹⁴ As well there was a belief that some physical resources were so important that society, rather than individuals or groups, should

⁹³Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, p. 83

⁹⁴An example is Public Notice from Survey Office, Van Diemen's Land 4 September 1830 indicating that 'allotted portions of Townships ... be used as commons by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, rather than those tracts of land should be leased to individuals' in HTG 10 September 1830 HM Hull, *The Experience of forty years in the Colony*, London, 1859, p. 55 gives the example of a sale of the Town Commons of Hamilton, 2,000 acres into small allotments

have control. Crown land reserves, which stemmed from Norman parks and hunting grounds, were used to ensure these rights. In North America specific adaptations were made such as denominating certain land for recreation, native reserves, and timber reserves to supply timber for naval purposes. In Australian colonies, other controls were used before the reserve system became prominent. An 1825 despatch from Secretary of State for the Colonies, Earl Bathurst, contained instructions for 'making the necessary reservations for public purposes.' Most reservations were pragmatic assessments of needs such as reserving land for towns and villages and their future expansion, as well as catering for spiritual and cultural needs by providing for churches, parsonages and schools, and, more relevantly for this work, 'for the purposes of health and recreation ... and [for] every object of public convenience, health or gratification'. As this was to occur before waste lands were sold or granted, surveyors were identify suitable sites or areas and mark them on charts.⁹⁵ Darling's commission reiterated these principles with modifications to reserve for 'public convenience, utility, health or enjoyment'.⁹⁶

In Van Diemen's Land, Arthur lamented that these instructions 'unfortunately arrived too late; all the best tracts in the Settled Districts have been located to Settlers' and later, that land, mostly inferior, had been reserved for glebes.⁹⁷ Under 1828 regulations the Crown reserved for itself such quantities of indigenous timber, stone, and other materials' as were necessary to make roads to 'Mines of Gold and Silver'.⁹⁸ Although we have seen in Chapter 2 that the Ripon Regulations, 1831, replaced land grants by sale, coal mines and all land within a hundred feet of the

⁹⁵*HRA* 1, XI, Bathurst to Brisbane, 1 January 1825 pp. 437-8; similar instructions were issued to Captain Stirling, *HRA* 3, VI, 30 December 1828 p 601

⁹⁶*HRA* 1, XII, p. 117 'Instructions to Governor Darling'

⁹⁷*HRA* 3, IV, pp. 311-12 Arthur to Bathurst 10 August 1825 & instructions issued to surveyors *HRA* 3, V, pp. 123-5 Arthur to Bathurst 8 March 1826

⁹⁸*HRA* 3, VII, p. 197 Arthur to Huskisson, 18 April 1828

high water mark were added to previous reserves.⁹⁹ Thus there were 'utility' reserves and those providing for or protecting environmental resources. Wright describes the former, comprising land for wharves, government buildings, schools, and towns, as 'land-uses which smoothed community and commercial interactions.'¹⁰⁰ The latter, which became popularly known as Crown Land reserves, were identified by some intrinsic value or resource and were frequently under threat of encroachment.

Most Australian colonies passed land acts from the late 1850s or early 1860s designed to allocate land more rationally and to establish a yeomanry as a countervailing force to pastoral domination.¹⁰¹ In addition to reiterating earlier purposes for creating reserves, Victorian acts specified particular forms of recreation and amusement, and safeguarded water and timber resources.¹⁰² As well the acts outlined requisite measures for promulgation such as petitions from residents and groups.¹⁰³ Public concerns about timber destruction and the impact of mining was exacerbated by newspaper reports of landscape change and by sales of GP Marsh's book. In Victoria, *Man and Nature* enjoyed 'a remarkable popularity being quoted by politicians, scientific associations and press.' Wright concludes that the book was 'a verification rather than revelation' because it 'expressed what many colonists

⁹⁹For the Ripon regulations see *HRA* 1, XVI, Goderich to Darling 14 February 1831 note 25 p. 850 & Regulations in Government Notice No 109, in *HTG* 11 June 1831 These conditions were repeated in *HTG* 18 February 1832 p. 57

¹⁰⁰RV Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain: space and the public interest in Victoria, 1836-84*, Melbourne, 1989, p. 9

¹⁰¹Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, pp. 106-7 provides a useful summation of Victorian Acts with the 1860, 1862, 1865 Amending Act and 1869 Land Acts were relevant; JM Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia, 1788-1914: Guardians, Improvers and Profit: an introductory survey*, Melbourne, 1976, pp. 82-88

¹⁰²The 1869 act provided reserves for the growth and preservation of timber, for general discussion of forests see Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia*, pp. 53-82, 117-126 & for water pp. 127-140

¹⁰³Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, pp. 134-5 & for petitions from groups such as Acclimatisation Societies pp. 115-6

daily observed.¹⁰⁴ Also there was mutual reinforcement with states acting on news and opinion from other states and overseas.¹⁰⁵ Legislation, however, could not guarantee the end of abuses, which ranged from exploiting resources without licence and absorbing reserves within private lands, to using land practices which reduced the quantity and quality of water.

From the late 1870s, despite fluctuations in colonial economies, there was a trend to reserve land for scenic attractions. In most states around the 1880s and 1890s there arose a number of amateur scientific organisations, including royal societies, field naturalists,¹⁰⁶ Linnaean societies and Australian Ornithological Union.¹⁰⁷ Some, such as the bird groups and royal societies were based on British models, and can be seen as part of an international science movement.¹⁰⁸ Activity waxed and waned largely according to the number of energetic individuals, although membership overwhelmingly was confined to professionals and upper middle class. Involvement of museum staff and politicians was a stimulus. In Western Australia the Director of Western Australian Museum, Bernard Woodward, Governor Sir Francis Robinson and explorer-politician Sir John Forrest offered moral and practical support for setting aside land.¹⁰⁹ Ferdinand Von Mueller's 1890 speech to the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, (AAAS), eloquently

¹⁰⁴Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, pp. 153; Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia*, pp. 54-63; Marsh's work was cited in Royal Society discussion's on forest conservation, see *PPRST* 1902 pp. xiii-xix

¹⁰⁵Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, p. 182

¹⁰⁶For an example of concern about preservation of flora and fauna see *Victorian Naturalist*, Vol XX (4) August 1903, p. 1

¹⁰⁷In West Australia formation of a Royal Society, 1914 and Naturalists Club 1924 were much later than other states see WA Sub-Committee of Australian Academy Science Committee on National Parks, *National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, Canberra, 1965, pp. 20-21; for a general history see L Robin, *The flight of the emu: a hundred years of Australian ornithology, 1901-2001*, Melbourne, 2001, pp. 1-16

¹⁰⁸The British Bird Observers Union was a model, Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', p. 185

¹⁰⁹*National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, pp. 11, 15-16; For biographies see FK Crowley, 'Sir William Cleaver Francis Robinson', *ADB* Vol 6, pp. 50-1; I Crawford, 'Bernard Henry Woodward', *ADB* Vol 12, pp. 567-8 & FK Crowley, 'Sir John Forrest', *ADB* Vol 8, pp. 544-551

pleaded for 'choice areas', not necessarily large, to be set aside for native flora and consequently fauna. Furthermore

rural occupation should never be allowed to have any access with their disturbing influence on primeval harmonies. Such spots should be proclaimed for all time the people's unalienable property, and every inhabitant or visitor of the locality should consider himself the co-preserver of such areas, so as to aid in preventing accidental invasion or casual ignition of intentional spoliation.¹¹⁰

Intercolonial links were provided by the Australian Ornithological Union and, more importantly, AAAS, which provided a forum for ideas and which nationally advocated amongst other things reserves and flora and fauna protection. Its 1893 Congress, which recommended creation and management of reserves, illustrates the Association's value.¹¹¹ As with the United States experience, successful advocacy stemmed from being able to convince utilitarian opponents that the specified area was worthless for any exploitable human activity.

Although states travelled different paths to the park destination,¹¹² similar legislation was enacted. In New South Wales, a worthless area south of Sydney became National Park in 1879, the world's second oldest. Influential state politician Sir John Robertson was instrumental in the campaign,¹¹³ while railway links gave the Sydney masses access to this recreational area. To augment finances, timber cutting and some grazing continued.¹¹⁴ Thus Park management adopted what is today termed a multiple land use policy, although providing for recreation and pleasure reflected the dominance of anthropocentrism.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰*National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, p. 16

¹¹¹*National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, p. 13

¹¹²Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, pp. 91-101 & Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia*, pp. 113-116

¹¹³For biographical detail see Bede Nairn, 'Sir John Robertson', *ADB* Vol 6, pp. 38-46

¹¹⁴J Davidson & P. Spearritt, *Holiday business: tourism in Australia since 1870*, Carlton, Vic, 2000, pp. 226-7 & *Wasteland to World Heritage*, pp. 91-3

¹¹⁵Davidson & Spearritt, *Holiday business*, p. 227 891 Bel Air Park, South Australia, being a 'public national recreational and pleasure ground.'

Bardwell outlines three different phases in park development in Victoria¹¹⁶ — establishment of a philosophical foundation, a pioneering stage and the campaign — which have a wider applicability. Initially organisations, mainly natural science groups, and individuals, especially newspaper reporters and nature writers such as Donald McDonald¹¹⁷ were influential. Artists, writers, and sympathetic public servants cultivated the ground for new attitudes. James Bonwick, Tasmanian and Australian historian, in 1858 advocated at Tower Hill near Koroit an 'everlasting Reserve' for those who 'sympathise with nature, who love an undisturbed communion with the grand and sublime'.¹¹⁸ Over time Crown lands regulations detailed methods for creating reserves which in part reflected individual or community aspirations. Forest destruction by mining activity made clearer the need for reform.¹¹⁹ In Bardwell's middle stage public organisations, the public pioneers were press and concerned individuals. Such organisations were predominantly scientific with some, previously mentioned, drawing on experience and knowledge derived from Australia-wide links. Motives varied: the Australian Natives Association regarded natural resource conservation as a patriotic duty, while walking groups saw parks as places of recreation.¹²⁰ Towering above all opinion leaders were Professor Baldwin Spencer and Baron von Mueller.¹²¹ To ensure campaign success, many of these elements, legislation, an individual or individuals with personal prestige, pressure groups and local community interest, had to coalesce.

¹¹⁶Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 332-74

¹¹⁷H Anderson, 'Donald Alaster McDonald', *ADB* Vol 10, p. 249; T Griffiths, 'The Natural History of Melbourne: the Culture of Nature Writing in Victoria, 1880-1945', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol 3 No 93, October 1989, pp. 339-65, provides an illuminating study of McDonald and Charles Barrett

¹¹⁸Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', p. 378

¹¹⁹Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 335-350

¹²⁰Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 351-364

¹²¹CJ Lloyd, 'Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer', *ADB* Vol 12, pp. 33-6; D Morris, 'Sir Ferdinand von Mueller', *ADB* Vol 5, pp. 306-8; generally see Bardwell pp. 365-71

Two examples briefly illumine these causes. In 1892 the Tower Hill National Park Act, introduced by local MP Sir Bryan O'Loghlen, was passed creating 'a national park for public recreation purposes' — which showed that despite the name it was simply another reserve.¹²² The campaign for Mt Buffalo national park, 1888-1909, is notable because Weindorfer was to use it as a model for the Cradle Mt campaign. In addition, Bardwell cites this as an exemplar of a local movement concerned with tourism promotion by highlighting local scenic and recreational assets. Cattlemen's local knowledge was used when some acted as guides and constructed tracks during the 1880s. A newspaper, *Bright Alpine Observer*, the Bright Alpine Club, 1888, and the extension of the railway to Bright in 1890 played key roles in highlighting the district and creating common purpose. Despite shire support, the Lands Department thwarted park status believing the existing timber reserve guaranteed protection. Then an outsider, Melbourne geologist EJ Dunn, attracted official attention and thus funding for road construction. Local chalets were complemented by a government-built establishment. In 1908 the area became a national park and the following year a native game sanctuary.¹²³

Most Australian parks conformed to the American model of 'worthless land', often connected by railway to urban centres to become playgrounds for the masses.¹²⁴ The desires of some that the park be sanctuaries for flora and fauna were subordinated to the economics of tourism, apparently the only language understood by politicians. Parks were poorly funded and by 1920 the only park in Victoria with a paid ranger was at Wilson's Promontory. The exemplar of walking club activism was Myles Dunphy's Mountain Trails Club, 1914, in Sydney, which

¹²²Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 377-8

¹²³Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 393-96, the Bright Alpine Club's *Illustrated Guide to the Australian Alps and Buffalo Ranges* was salient

¹²⁴CM Hall, 'The "Worthless Lands Hypothesis" and Australia's National Parks and Reserves', pp. 441-456 in K Frawley & N Semple, *Australia's Ever Changing Forests*, Canberra, 1988

emphasised self-contained walking in more remote areas.¹²⁵ This 'bush brotherhood' was ahead of its time in emphasising the benefits derived from wildness.¹²⁶ Reserves and parks were always under threat with Powell asserting that reserves were often 'resented, frequently misused and always threatened by the prospect of revocation'.¹²⁷ The Pinjara flora and fauna reserve, (1894) in Western Australia subsequently became a timber reserve under government legislation, illustrating this trend.¹²⁸

Concurrently, there were moves for fauna and flora protection which complemented earlier enactments rather than being innovative. Most colonies had had game acts which aimed at preservation of species rather than preservation of an environment, thus echoing the United States experience. This is understandable given that the links between the two entities were not fully comprehended until the 20th century. Initially most states required licences to control fauna numbers before legislation protected indigenous and introduced species through measures such as close seasons.¹²⁹ While restrictions became more stringent, governments were under pressure from the powerful fur industry and hunting lobby and farmers.¹³⁰

Tasmania

In Tasmania there has been no comparable study to Wright's to shed light on contemporary thinking and practices and to outline key characters and major forces. Concern over timber and the need to ensure adequate supply of pure water for

¹²⁵G Mosley, *Battle for the Bush: The Blue Mountains, the Australian Alps and the origins of the Wilderness Movement*, Sydney, 1999 passim but especially pp. 19-21

¹²⁶Davidson & Speeritt, *Holiday Business*, p. 230, Hall, *From Wasteland to World Heritage*, pp. 104-5

¹²⁷Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, p. xiv

¹²⁸*National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, p. 18; Davidson & Speeritt, *Holiday Business*, pp. 227-8 give a similar example on the Murray River

¹²⁹An example is the WA 1874 Game Act, *National Parks and Nature Reserves in Western Australia*, pp. 11-12

¹³⁰For general discussion see Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria', pp. 156-7

growing towns were constant problem for authorities.¹³¹ regulations dealing with these problems should not be seen as some Damascus-like conversion because there had been recognition by government and individuals, even if motives differed, from inception of settlement that resources were finite and required careful husbandry. Lieut.-Governor Collins' desire to protect water quality and prevent the extinction of individual species such as seals and swans indicates this thinking.¹³² Historian Tim Bonyhady counters modern dismissal of these moves by claiming that colonial authorities should be praised for promulgating regulations in advance of contemporary British measures.¹³³ Sometimes private groups shared similar concerns, as exemplified by the July 1837 association for the purpose of protecting game, native and imported. Motives were not solely altruistic with protection of private property paramount.¹³⁴ These examples reflect the balancing act between present use and future requirements and belie the simplistic characterisation of colonial societies as altogether exploitative.¹³⁵

A brief examination of key land acts — 1858, 1863, 1870, 1881 and 1890 — reveals basic continuity of colonial attitudes to reservation of land.¹³⁶ As seen in Chapter 3, the 1858 Waste Lands Act reflected earlier legislation in reserving land for roads, defence, education, public worship and sites associated with water transport. Indications of transformation to a more mature society with diverse

¹³¹An example is the The Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1881, 44° Vict No 17

¹³²See General Orders 28 February & 10 March 1804, *HRA* 3, 1, pp 219-20 & for later regulations see 1837 *HTG* 19 May 1837 where Govt Notice No 85 proposed an Act for preservation of public reservoirs & watercourses & 11 August 1837 for 8° William IV No 6 pure water for supply of inhabitants; for a subsequent measure, Act for Pure Water, see *HTG* 3 October 1848

¹³³T Bonyhady, *The Colonial Earth*, Melbourne, 2000, pp. 5-6

¹³⁴*Colonial Times* 11 July 1837 the group proposed funding prosecutions against trespassers on private property

¹³⁵W Lines, *The Great South Land*, Sydney, 1991, is a prime example of this simplistic approach

¹³⁶See Chapter 3 for earlier discussion of 1858 & 1863 Acts. For the Waste Lands Act 1881, 45° Vict No. 5 allowed for specific water and timber reserves but did provide for public reserves or parks, see M Row, 'The Tasmanian timber trade, 1830-1930: a case study in spatial interaction', BSc (Hons) University of Tasmania, 1978, p. 37

interests were reservations for 'public Libraries, Museums, Literary or Scientific Institutions ... [and] Places for Recreation and Amusement ... or for any other Purpose of public Safety, Convenience, Health, or Enjoyment ...'.¹³⁷ The assertion by Mendel that the Cuvier Valley was reserved in 1858 are erroneous and misrepresent the Waste Lands Act and the Unsettled Lands Act of that year. The latter was designed to encourage settlement in unoccupied country west of a line from Mt Hugel northerly to the Cuvier River's junction with Lake Petrarch and northwest to Barn Bluff.¹³⁸

With increased prosperity there were increased demands for recreational reserves. In discussing Zeehan's needs in 1892 the *Zeehan and Dundas Herald* avowed that 'The average Britisher and his descendants take to pleasure as naturally as a fish to water ...' as demonstrated by the state's parks and gardens which were highly regarded by visitors.¹³⁹ As well the Act outlined requisite measures for reservation: exemption from sale and a 60 day wait after publication in the *Gazette*. These grounds for creating reserves for public purposes were repeated in the 1863, 1870 and 1890 Acts which also allowed for revocation under certain conditions.¹⁴⁰ The last mentioned was a throwback to the 1820s by ordering recreation reservations in any future town. By providing a general framework within which land could be reserved for recreation, amusement and enjoyment,¹⁴¹ these Acts

¹³⁷1858 Waste Lands Act 21° Vict No 33, Cl 2. L Mendel, 'Scenery to Wilderness: National Park Development in Tasmania, 1916-1992' PhD (Geography and Environmental Studies) University of Tasmania, 1999, p. 24 erroneously claims that the 1863 Waste Lands Act was central whereas these provisions were provided in the 1858 Act.

¹³⁸1858 Unsettled Lands Act 21 Vict No 34

¹³⁹ZDH 15 December 1892

¹⁴⁰1863 Waste Lands Act, 27° Vict No 22, Sect 2- 3, 1870 Waste Lands Act, 34° Vict No 10, Sect 12-14, regulations under the 1870 Act, see HTG 1 November 1870; & 1890 Crown Lands Act 54° Vict No 8 Sect 24; these conditions persisted into the 20th century - see Crown Lands Act 1903 3° Edw VII No 39 Sect 24

¹⁴¹Examples include racecourses, botanical gardens and parks cricket grounds, agricultural showgrounds. Contrary to claims by Mosley and Parks and Wildlife's, however, the 1863 Act did not specifically establish scenic reserves. Parks & Wildlife, 'A Full History of the Parks and Wildlife Service', <http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au> p. 2; claims that it was mainly on the initiative of district surveyors to suggest reservations for 'any purpose of public safety, convenience, health or enjoyment'; JG Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', PhD, Australian

were the basis for the creation of scenic reserves. Under the 1881 Waste Lands Act forest reserves were created.¹⁴²

The importance of government power to withdraw from selection and sale under Section 4 of the 1870 Waste Lands Act was illustrated in 1885. In March the Douglas Government established the first scenic reserve by withdrawing from sale 300 acres at Russell Falls.¹⁴³ Later that year the Executive Council approved the withdrawal from sale or selection of Waste Lands within half a mile of a number of major lakes, mostly on the Central Plateau, and Lake St Clair.¹⁴⁴ This can be regarded as the culmination of government moves to safeguard access to and protect watercourses and a reflection of their recreational and scenic potential. It also illustrated Australia-wide administrative and legislative developments.¹⁴⁵

By permitting acquisition of lands for 'public purposes', the 1891 Lands Resumption Act¹⁴⁶ intentionally or otherwise facilitated promulgation of scenic reserves. This should not be overestimated, for such moves were costly and ran counter to prevailing utilitarian attitudes. As well earlier legislation such as the Mineral Lands Act 1877 allowed the Minister of Lands and Works to grant leases for mining on and public land reserve with the proviso that leases could not endanger or prevent the use or enjoyment of these areas.¹⁴⁷

National University, 1963, p 211, Bardwell, 'National Parks in Victoria, p. 218 similarly claims that the 1863 Act made provision for setting aside scenic reserves. It is true only in that it provided for general purposes but did not specifically identify scenic reserves

¹⁴²45° Vict No 5 Sect 6

¹⁴³HTG 10 March 1885 Under 34° Vict No 10 Sect 4

¹⁴⁴Executive Council Minute 62, 2 February 1885, EC 4/18 p 82 AOT; other lakes included Great Lake, Arthurs Tooms Pedder Edgar and Nineteen Lagoons, & was published in HTG 24 February 1885 Under 34° Vict No 10 Sect 4

¹⁴⁵Similar moves to reserve 100 feet of land above the high water mark in coastal areas and round major watercourses had occurred in Victoria see Wright, *The Bureaucrats' Domain*, pp. 159-161 for the 1860s and 1870s

¹⁴⁶55° Vict No 42

¹⁴⁷41° Vict No 7 sect 10

Reservation impulses were not a government monopoly as a minority of individuals were concerned with retaining scenic attractions in the late 19th century. James Fenton, historian and earlier land agent for Dr Cornelius Casey, (grandfather of a future governor-general) reserved an area near Forthside 'so that the beautiful foliage surrounding the waterfall might be preserved from injury.'¹⁴⁸ In commenting on a picturesque waterfall near Mount Hugel, Fenton predicted that 'When roads and resting places are established in those charming wilds of Tasmania, they will be the paradise of future tourists'.¹⁴⁹ On their farm under Mt Fawknor, Mrs Penn-Smith preserved a spot 'valuable for [future] people of taste' which unfortunately did not eventuate.¹⁵⁰

During the 1890s the Royal Society reflected nation-wide concerns for preservation of forests, native fauna and flora as well as areas of scenic beauty. With the failure of the Van Diemen's Land Bank casting gloom over contemporary Tasmanian economy and attitudes, these preservation concerns were intertwined with moves to develop tourism. Thus in 1891 the Royal Society urged preservation of the Southport or Ida Bay Caves as the New South Wales authorities earlier had protected Jenolan Caves.¹⁵¹

Paralleling these changing attitudes were significant alterations in the statewide organisation of tourism described in Chapter 4. The TTA believed that pooling resources would permit publication of guide books, allow major advertising within Tasmania and on the mainland. Tasmania's parochialism flourished and regional

¹⁴⁸J. Fenton, *Bush Life in Tasmania fifty years ago: an account of pioneer work in Devon*, Devonport, 1964, p. 173 & CRamsay, *With the Pioneers*, Latrobe, 1980, pp. 61-2

¹⁴⁹Fenton, *Bush Life*, p. 174 The waterfall was brought under public notice by WR Bell

¹⁵⁰F Penn-Smith, *The Unexpected*, London, 1933, p. 56. In June 1894 an unnamed Launcestonian sought von Mueller's advice about maintaining a few acres in a pristine state near Launceston. *PPRST* 1894-5, p. ix, & for Von Mueller's advocacy, see Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage*, p. 95

¹⁵¹*PPRST* 1891, p. x, Morton played a leading role

bodies, especially the Northern Tasmanian Tourist Association, NTTA, were reluctant to cede control to a central body fearing absorption amounted to disappearance from the tourist promotions. Internal maladministration, a whiff of scandal and the desire of the Railway department to organise tourism so that it received maximum benefits led to the TTA's collapse.¹⁵² In 1914 the Government Tourist Bureau rose from the wreckage.¹⁵³ With the appointment of Emmett, labelled the 'Father of Tasmanian tourism',¹⁵⁴ tourism promotion of wild places became more systematic especially with his appointment to the SPB and National Park Board.

This leapfrogs our narrative. Local concerns for fauna protection were in part inspired by the AAAS's intercolonial links. At Adelaide in 1893 the AAAS advocated Freycinet Peninsula as a fauna sanctuary as part of the proposal for absolute protection for particular species.¹⁵⁵ Although lacking enthusiasm for this proposal,¹⁵⁶ the Royal Society was more forceful in seeking protection for the mutton bird and fur seal industries.¹⁵⁷ Despite associated difficulties, politician-businessman CH Grant foresaw the possibility of obtaining a national park.¹⁵⁸ There was relative success because by 1899 there were twelve reserves, half of

¹⁵²For some details of Royal Commission into Tasmanian Tourism Association see *Cornwall Chronicle* 7 January 1915, S. Harris, 'Selling Tasmania: boosterism and the creation of the tourist state, 1912-1928', pp. 20-23 & 31-35

¹⁵³Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', pp. 23-34; C Morris, 'In pursuit of the travelling man: a study of Tasmanian tourism to 1905', BA Hons (Hist) University of Tasmania, 1993, for the earlier period

¹⁵⁴Harris, 'Selling Tasmania', passim but especially pp 26-28 for biographical details, J Thwaites, 'Evelyn Temple Emmett, *ADB*, Vol. 8, pp. 438-9

¹⁵⁵AAAS Report of 5th Meeting Adelaide 1893, Sydney, 1893, p. 241; *PPRST* 1894-95, p. xvi & for nationwide linkages such as Colonel Legge being a member of the Australasian Committee for the Preservation of Native Fauna see p. xxxvi

¹⁵⁶*PPRST* 1894-95, p. xvi

¹⁵⁷For discussion of mutton bird campaign, with Bishop Montgomery a notable advocate see *PPRST* 1894-95, pp. xiii, xvi-xvii, *PPRST*, 1896, pp. v-vi, *PPRST*, 1898-9 p. xv & for fur seals see *PPRST*, 1894-95 p. xvii, 1895 p. xxxiv-v

¹⁵⁸*PPRST*, 1894-5, p. xvi

which were scenic reserves including the original Russell Falls reserve, three were caves, two falls and a fernery.¹⁵⁹

The formation of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union 1901 and the Tasmanian Field Naturalist Club in October 1904 increased community scientific awareness. The latter catered more for the general enthusiast and was informally didactic as the maxim of member and noted educator Samuel Clemes that one learnt 'about nature from nature itself' illustrated.¹⁶⁰ Before the first edition of club magazine, *The Tasmanian Naturalist*, in 1907, members had some articles published in the *Tasmanian Mail* thus ensuring a wide audience for its activities.¹⁶¹ As with other scientific groups, the Field Naturalists emulated mainland counterparts by lobbying actively for the creation of flora and fauna and scenic reserves.¹⁶²

Fauna protection debate continued with some linking specific species to areas. Louisiana-born Alexander Morton,¹⁶³ Curator of the Tasmanian Museum, introduced a discordant note by claiming the needs of acclimatisation was taking precedence over preservation of native fauna. Furthermore he alleged that the black swan might follow the emu and Forester kangaroo in becoming a 'lost Tasmanian race'.¹⁶⁴ With the Propsting Ministry consisting of 'Tasmanian born Britishers', now was a propitious time for remedial action. Thus there was renewed attention on the Freycinet-Schouten Island area because of its worthless land with only small

¹⁵⁹An example of a botanical reserve vested in local authority see the Botanical reserve, 23 December 1903 controlled by the Queenstown Town Board, 7 July 1906; for the 1899 list see *TPP* 1899, No. 64. 'Reserves for Recreation Grounds', scenic reserves — Forester Peninsula, Blowhole, Eaglehawk Neck, Adventure Bay, Kendall Parish and Honeywood

¹⁶⁰J. Fenton, *A century afield: a history of the Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club*, Hobart, 2004, p. 71

¹⁶¹Fenton, *A century afield*, p. 32

¹⁶²Fenton, *A century afield*, p. 105

¹⁶³For autobiographical details see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, pp. 312-3

¹⁶⁴*PPRST*, 1905, p. xxxi for abstract of June 1904 proceedings

pockets of freehold, picturesque scenery and great tourist potential with recreational fishing and walking and from the variety of fauna. Lobbying by the Royal Society, Field Naturalists and tourist groups resulted in the proclamation of a game sanctuary in 1906. As in the United States and on the mainland, government sentiments were not backed by adequate expenditure so the measure was a short term failure.¹⁶⁵ In 1903 Beattie had suggested the creation of an East Coast national park to protect native fauna.¹⁶⁶

Two other areas emerged as potential national parks. There was a widespread view that Mt Wellington was a wonderful asset to Hobartians in particular and Tasmanians in general, although the *Weekly Courier* queried whether it actually met national park requirements. Furthermore, it echoed prevailing sentiment that such assets 'should not be allowed to drift into private hands.'¹⁶⁷ Eloquent natural historian, Rev HD Atkinson lamented the Cascade brewing Company's deforestation of the lower slopes and urged park status on aesthetic and moral grounds. Such a park would be 'a paradise to the botanist, the lover of nature and the ubiquitous tourist, ... would pay better than "Tattersall's sweeps" and hurt the moral sense of no man.'¹⁶⁸ Scientific organisations, individuals and the Tasmanian Tourist Association, (TTA) successfully agitated for a Mount Wellington Park in 1906 with control vested in the Hobart City Council.¹⁶⁹ In their campaign

¹⁶⁵Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', p. 212 & Fenton, *A century afield*, pp. 105-6 for failure to have a ranger appointed; for lobbying by field naturalists see *The Tasmanian Naturalist*, Vol. 2(2), October 1890, p. 23. Land was withheld from sale under the 1904 Crown Lands Act. In August 1906 JW Beattie stressed the need for preservation on the Island, RS 29/6/5

¹⁶⁶Beattie 14 September 1903, RS 29/6/1

¹⁶⁷*Weekly Courier* 20 May 1905

¹⁶⁸HD Atkinson, *The Woodpecker papers: tales of Tasmania in the late 1880's*, Launceston, 2001, pp. 25-6

¹⁶⁹Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', p. 213; E De Quincey, *The History of Mount Wellington, A Tasmanian Sketchbook*, Hobart, 1987, pp. 70 & 92. The Mountain Park Act 1906, 6° Edw. VII No 11. Also D Quarmby, 'Old Forests and Tasmania's early national parks movement', pp. 196-227 in J Dargavel, D Gaughwin & B Libbis (eds) *Australia's Ever-changing Forests V*, Canberra, 2002, pp. 199-201

Hobartians had models, Royal National Park in Sydney and Adelaide's Bel-Air, to emulate.

Although the campaign for a Gordon River reservation¹⁷⁰ was less newsworthy than that for Mt Wellington, it contained elements of modern movements. Beattie's photographs were salient and proponents argued that protection was more economically valuable than the 'ruthless hand of the present-day utilitarianism'¹⁷¹ exemplified by the 'insatiable timber merchant'.¹⁷² Irony abounded with Mt Lyell manager Robert Sticht supporting protection avowing that piners' interests were 'paltry compared with the preservation of natural scenery'.¹⁷³ That Mt Lyell's actions were devastating the Queenstown landscape apparently escaped Sticht's notice. A prescient Beattie observed that sometimes assets currently regarded as worthless, might become valuable in the future, and noted that scientific argument alone was unable to influence public opinion. Lack of precise topographical information and the boundaries of preservation, particularly use of distinguishable natural features as boundaries were debated.¹⁷⁴

The Crown Lands Act, 1911, reflected changing attitudes towards scenic reserves and preservation of flora and fauna. To existing purposes for reservations were added

sanctuaries for birds, or for acclimatisation purposes, preservation of game or fauna or flora, either native or imported ... [and] for any other public purpose that he may think fit, whether similar to any of those abovementioned or not.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰JW Beattie 'Notes on the Gordon River and on the need for reservation of Land along its banks', *PPRST*, 1908, p. 35 & T Bonyhady, 'The artist as Activist: John Watt Beattie on the Gordon River', pp. 21-31 in P Hay (ed) *Imagine Nature*, Hobart, 1996

¹⁷¹*PPRST*, 1908, p. viii

¹⁷²*PPRST*, 1908, p. ix for Dr Noetling's claim

¹⁷³*PPRST*, 1908, p. ix

¹⁷⁴*PPRST*, 1908, p. 35

¹⁷⁵Crown Lands Act 1911, 2° Geo V No 64 Sect 11

Four years elapsed before the Earle Government passed the Scenery Preservation Act for the 'Acquisition and Preservation of Lands of Scenic or Historic Interest, and for other purposes', which bore close resemblances with similar New Zealand legislation. For the first time, scenery was regarded as sufficiently important to warrant specific legislation.¹⁷⁶

Debates on the 1915 Act provide insight into contemporary attitudes. In the second reading Lands Minister J Belton indicated that a southern Tasmanian deputation had sought creation of permanent reserves. He believed that, as the present system of reservation was 'subject to the whims and caprices of Ministers', it would be better to have a controlling board decide such important matters. This was a rare moment of self-reflection on possible misuse of political power. There was general unanimity over composition of such a board: Mulcahy, Sadler and Lewis concurred with Hean's wish to include those like Leonard Rodway¹⁷⁷ 'known to be specially interested in the subject', while Marshall's suggestion for consultation with the mayor or warden in which the reserve was located was defeated. Of Hean's recommendations for the Surveyor-general, Railways Commissioner, Tourist Bureau Director and Engineer-in-Chief, only the Chief Health officer failed to win a place in the Act.¹⁷⁸ Interestingly Lewis's comments were informed by personal experience, he being probably the only politician to have visited both St Clair and Cradle Mt. Also salient were Lewis' belief that reservation would be costly; LF Giblin's desire to have river frontages reserved, RJ Sadler's concern about short term leases, and H Hayes' objection to adjoining owners bearing part costs of fencing reserves.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶6° Geo V No 15 & the New Zealand Scenery Preservation Act, 1903 3 Edw. VII, No 54

¹⁷⁷For autobiographical details see A Elias, 'Leonard Rodway', *ADB* Vol. 11, pp 420-1 & *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, pp. 111-112

¹⁷⁸*Mercury* 30 July 1915 Sadler also proposed the Chief Justice

¹⁷⁹*Mercury* 30 July 1915

Under the Act a Scenery Preservation Board, (SPB) was created for the 'entire care, control, and management of any reserves ... and cause to be carried out all works ... authorised by Parliament.¹⁸⁰ Its composition, described above, but with the addition of four government appointees, including a Tourism Department representative,¹⁸¹ indicated that tourism, and thus government railways, was central to park creation. Yet Harris in 'Selling Tasmania' blithely ignores the import of the act with a brief factual statement.¹⁸² Scenic or historic sites were to be recommended and, if on private land, the 1910 Lands Resumption Act provided guidelines.¹⁸³ The SPB could vest control of reserves 'in any municipal council or local authority or in any special board'.¹⁸⁴ Although reserves were to be inalienable,¹⁸⁵ revocation could occur if there was destruction and damage in the opinion of the Governor ie the government of the day,¹⁸⁶ and leases up to three years could be granted 'to occupy, open or cleared portions of any reserve'.¹⁸⁷ Prohibited activities included lighting fires, cutting or removing timber, killing or taking birds or native or imported game, and vandalism.¹⁸⁸

Lands Minister Belton's nominees were Launceston Tourist Bureau manager, LS Bruce, CS Wilson from Zeehan, and Emmett of the Tourist Department. National Park, St Columba Falls, Freycinet Peninsula and Carnarvon, now Port Arthur, were declared scenic reserves.¹⁸⁹ At the initial meeting, surveyors were instructed in the

¹⁸⁰6° Geo V No 15, Sect 6

¹⁸¹6° Geo V No 15, Sect 3; The H of A agreed on 2nd reading to LC amendments to the composition of Board omitting Chief Health Officer and Director of State Tourism department but agreeing to a representative from that Department. *TPP* [H of A] Votes & Proceedings 10 November 1915 pp. 15, 304

¹⁸²Harris, 'Selling Tasmania', p. 98

¹⁸³6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect 7

¹⁸⁴6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect 13; in 1919 PW Kellaway was appointed Inspector of the South Bruny Scenic Reserve at £5 pa, *TGG* 4 March 1919

¹⁸⁵6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect 9

¹⁸⁶6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect 16, the H of A disagreed with LC's proposed amendment to clause 16, Votes and proceedings of *TPP* [LC] 1915-16 Votes & Proceedings 11 November 1915 p. 68

¹⁸⁷6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect 17

¹⁸⁸6° Geo V. No. 15, Sect *

¹⁸⁹For SPB see *TGG* 11 April 1916 and reserves *TGG* 29 August 1916

course of their normal duty to note 'Waterfalls, forest clad mountain gorges, rocky outcrops, attractive and commanding viewpoints, or other places of historical or scenic interest and natural beauty suitable for reservation'.¹⁹⁰ By 1921 fifteen of the thirty one recommended reserves had been proclaimed.

The Act further stimulated those advocating an extension to the Russell Falls Reserve. In the ensuing campaign a wide range of organisations — the Royal Society, Field Naturalists, University of Tasmania, Hobart City and New Norfolk Councils, Australian Natives Association and the Fisheries Commission — formed an umbrella group, the National Park Association for Mount Field. As well, committed individuals such as William Crooke, ardent angler and son of the controversial Rev Robert Crooke, devoted much effort to achieving success. Complaints of continued timber cutting and hunting revealed the limitations of existing regulations.¹⁹¹ Railway-generated tourism, important in park formation in United States and Canada, was evident but the possible extension of the Derwent Valley Railway beyond the Falls became a matter of concern.¹⁹² Finally in 1916 the aim was achieved when the reserve became the 27,000 acre National Park.¹⁹³ Demands for a special administrative body to oversee management, as the SPB could not perform the task, were not met until the following year.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰Scenery Preservation Board, Minute Books, 1916-37 AA264/1 7 June 1916 first meeting

¹⁹¹For timber cutting see *Daily Post* 13 August 1913; for a general account see Fenton, *A century afield*, pp. 105-109 & J Luckman, 'Historical Notes' pp. 30-34 in *Tasmanian Tramp*, No 11, 1953, pp. 30-1 & D Quarmby, 'Old Forests and Tasmania's early national parks movement', pp. 201-203; Mendel, 'Scenery to Wilderness' pp. 30-33 provides a sound account of major arguments for the Parks

¹⁹²Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', pp. 213-4; also *The Derwent Valley Railway Further Extension Act*, 1911, 2° Geo V No 25

¹⁹³*TGG* 29 August 1916

¹⁹⁴For an account of the campaign see C Lord, *The Foundation of the National Park*, *PPRST* 1918, pp. 74-5; the administrative body was formed in January 1917. For the National Park Board see *TGG* 30 January 1917; National Park Board comprised Chairman EA Counsel, Engineer-in-Chief Fowler, L Rodway the Government botanist, W Crooke of the National Park Association, Dr Bottrill and H Shoobridge for Hobart City and New Norfolk Councils respectively, Professor Flynn for the University Council, ET Emmett for the Tourist Branch of the Railway Department, PS Seager for Fisheries Commissioners and for the Field Naturalists and ANA Clive Lord and Wettenhall, and Henry Dobson of the Royal Society.

At the official opening in October motivations for a national park were revealed. Crooke's avowal that the Park was to enable future Tasmanians to 'see what primeval Tasmania was like' was a variation on saving an area for posterity.¹⁹⁵ The TTA extended the island's reputation as a 'sanatorium of the South' by claiming that the area was a health resort at a time when typhoid and diphtheria were prevalent. To encourage recreational anglers they advocated stocking streams with trout.¹⁹⁶ The *Mercury* opined that many people would not understand the significance of setting apart land for its scenic beauty.¹⁹⁷ It asserted that people, or at least those who understood what Parks stood for, wanted 'these things opened for reverent use and inspection, for the joy of men and women and children, for study and musing, and healthy holiday.' To ensure survival, competent management and appropriate financial assistance was essential. Education was essential to enable the people

to take pride in it and care for it, as a beautiful and wonderful possession of their own, so that it may be accessible and of use to everybody and still remain a thing of beauty and joy forever when even the war is a forgotten nightmare of the past¹⁹⁸

Then a sermon, not out of place in modern deep-green circles, thundered that

The only creature to be driven out of the park and kept out with a flaming sword is the Utilitarian, who would indiscriminately chop trees, spoil waterfalls, dig up rare plants, kill live things, and spoil and ravage and destroy everything for a money profit. If there ever comes to exist legislators who cannot see the value of such a place, we hope it will become a recognised custom to shoot them on sight whenever seen within three miles of the Park.¹⁹⁹

The Board appointed WA Belcher as park ranger,²⁰⁰ but regulations were not promulgated until April 1918. These rules prohibited lighting of fires, removal of timber, grazing, hunting, erecting buildings and engaging in commercial activities

¹⁹⁵*Mercury* 13 October 1917

¹⁹⁶*Mercury* 13 October 1917

¹⁹⁷*Mercury* 13 October 1917

¹⁹⁸*Mercury* 13 October 1917

¹⁹⁹*Mercury* 13 October 1917

²⁰⁰*TPP* 1918-1919, No 14, 'National Park Board Report for the Year 1917-18', p. 1

without authority.²⁰¹ With illegal hunting persisting despite the proclamation of a Park, the National Park Board applied for sanctuary status under the Animals and Birds Protection Act, 1919 to protect fauna and flora.²⁰² In 1920 a special board was appointed to administer the area.²⁰³

Cradle Country

As described in the Introduction, Dr G Bergman and Margaret Giordano have provided a detailed account of Weindorfer's life before his arrival in Victoria in 1900, so additional explanation is unnecessary. His childhood interest in botany, exemplified by collecting plants in the Carnic Alps,²⁰⁴ and agriculture²⁰⁵ lasted throughout his adult years. His appreciation of and love for mountains probably stemmed from the landscape of his native Carinthia, Spittal.²⁰⁶

Dorfer's five year Victorian sojourn was a useful apprenticeship for his Cradle experiences. Through membership of the Field Naturalists and mentorship by Dr CS Sutton²⁰⁷ he gained a valuable introduction to Australian botany. The naming of a shrub *Pultenaea Weindorferi spec. nov.* reflected the esteem in which Weindorfer was held by his fellow naturalists.²⁰⁸ He also developed a proficiency in writing articles, critical in his push for park status for Cradle Mt. Interesting was his comment that some plants at Mt Buffalo flourished above 4,500 feet 'to enjoy

²⁰¹TGG 16 April 1918

²⁰² For hunting see TPP 1918-1919 'National Park Board: Report for the Year 1917-18' p. 2 'even the risk of penalties has not prevented attempts to destroy native animals in the Park' four men caught; & for increased protection 'National Park Board: Report for 1919-20' TPP 1920-21, No 62, p. 2, & Animals & Birds Protection Act 1919 Section 9 & 10

²⁰³TGG 2 & 16 March 1920

²⁰⁴CS Sutton, 'Gustav Weindorfer', *Victorian Naturalist*, June 1932, p. 35; M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, Launceston, 1987

²⁰⁵GF Bergman, 'Gustav Weindorfer - Some biographical Notes', *Victorian Naturalist*, No. 71 April 1955, pp. 192-194

²⁰⁶Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, Hobart, 1959, pp. 8-9 & Giordano, pp. 2-3

²⁰⁷*Victorian Naturalist*, October 1950, Vol 67 p. 122 for obituary of Dr Charles Standforth Sutton, a member of the Vict Naturalists for nearly 50 years from 1900 till 1950

²⁰⁸Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 21

their existence far from the destructive hand of man.'²⁰⁹ Yet he was not content to remain a mere chronicler of species: his European upbringing facilitated comparisons between Antipodean and Old World flowers, while an enquiring mind sought the origins of alpine flora. Dorfer acquired an understanding and appreciation of the Australian landscape, especially mountains such as Hotham.²¹⁰ Concomitantly, he learnt about national parks, especially Mt Buffalo. Through the Field Naturalists he met, wooed and in 1906 wed Tasmanian born Kate Cowle, nearly eleven years his senior.²¹¹

The couple moved to Tasmania in the hope of becoming farmers. Perhaps Dorfer's first views of the northern reserve came from a honeymoon trip to Mount Roland in February 1906.²¹² The destination complemented a prior visit by Kate. From the summit in January 1903 she had anticipated later descriptions proclaiming that even the 'most ardent botanist or geologist must pause to admire it [ie the panorama], with that silent outreach of the soul towards eternal beauty.'²¹³ Dorfer recommended the distant mountain sights for 'all lovers of the picturesque in nature'.²¹⁴

In January 1909 Weindorfer and Dr Sutton with guide Woodhouse followed Wilmot farmer Bob Quaile's 'newly blazed track'²¹⁵ and stayed in a paling hut about a mile from the Cradle Valley entrance. The trip was a botanist's paradise

²⁰⁹G Weindorfer, 'Botanical report' in 'The Buffalo Mountains camp-out', *Victorian Naturalist*, March 1904 Vol XX (11), pp. 144-59 at p. 153; for a detailed account of these years see Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, pp. 13-21

²¹⁰FGA Barnard & CS Sutton, 'Among the Alpine Flowers', *Victorian Naturalist*, Vol XX (1) May 1903, pp. 4-12

²¹¹For Kate Cowle see S Schnackenburg, *Kate Weindorfer: the woman behind the man and the mountain*, Launceston, 1995, passim

²¹²Dorfer's accounts of the trip were written under pseudonyms Pat Heggerty and Mike O'Flannagan in *North West Advocate* 19 February & 6 March 1906 respectively; see also Schnackenburg, *Kate Weindorfer*, pp. 24-26

²¹³K Cowle, 'Notes of a Visit to Mount Roland, Tasmania', *Victorian Naturalist*, Sept 1903 Vol XX (5) p. 71

²¹⁴*Weekly Courier* 16 January 1907

²¹⁵Quaile received £15 for this work; for some biographical details see 'Proposed Railton-Wilmot Railway: Report of the Royal Commission', *TPP* 1902, No. 59, p. 7 Robert Quaile

highlighted by the first sighting in sixty years of rare pink flowered *Oenothera Tasmanica*.²¹⁶ The weather fluctuated from thick mist and rain which required compass navigation, to mountain and sea-scapes 'as fine a view as a tourist can imagine'.²¹⁷ Weindorfer was captivated by landscape which 'with its beech and pine forests greatly resembled his Carinthian homeland in its lofty alpine valleys, snow covered peaks gleaming over deep forests and blue lakes'. There were other attractions: the Cradle Mountains were

a veritable flower garden, a true Eldorado for the botanist, and a magnificent place for the tourist who is content to sleep on the hard ground with canvas over him or in one of the fairly common hunters' huts.²¹⁸

With a surfeit of botanical names, it is probable that the *Examiner* articles interested and influenced only ardent enthusiasts.

This was a prelude to a more extended stay by the Weindorfers and neighbour Ron Smith, son of the Philosopher, over the Christmas-New Year of 1910-1911. There were many highlights, such as Kate becoming the first lady to ascend Cradle. Weindorfer noted that for future walkers this climb proceeded along a 'somewhat troublesome but not dangerous track ... to the roof of Tasmania'.²¹⁹ A three hour stay was 'far too short to completely realize all those wonderful intricacies of nature's grandest architecture'.²²⁰ They made side trips to W Black's Fury Mine, climbed Mts Romulus, Remus and Brown, and visited mountain tarns. They noted the impact of prospectors and hunters having repeatedly fired button grass plains on

²¹⁶*Examiner* 19 August 1909 'Botanical Research at the Cradle Mountains and Black Bluff'

²¹⁷*Examiner* 20 August 1909, Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 25 & Giordano, *A man and a mountain*, pp. 26-8

²¹⁸G Weindorfer, 'Two Botanists in the Cradle Mountains, Tasmania', *Victorian Naturalist*, No 12, April 1912, p. 216

²¹⁹*Weekly Courier*, 29 October 1910; Tasmanian Government Tourist Department, *Beautiful Tasmania: Complete Guide to Tasmania*, Hobart, 1918, p. 149 'some of the mountains are hard to reach, yet no insuperable difficulties confront the mountaineer'

²²⁰Weindorfer, 'Two Botanists in the Cradle Mountains', p. 220

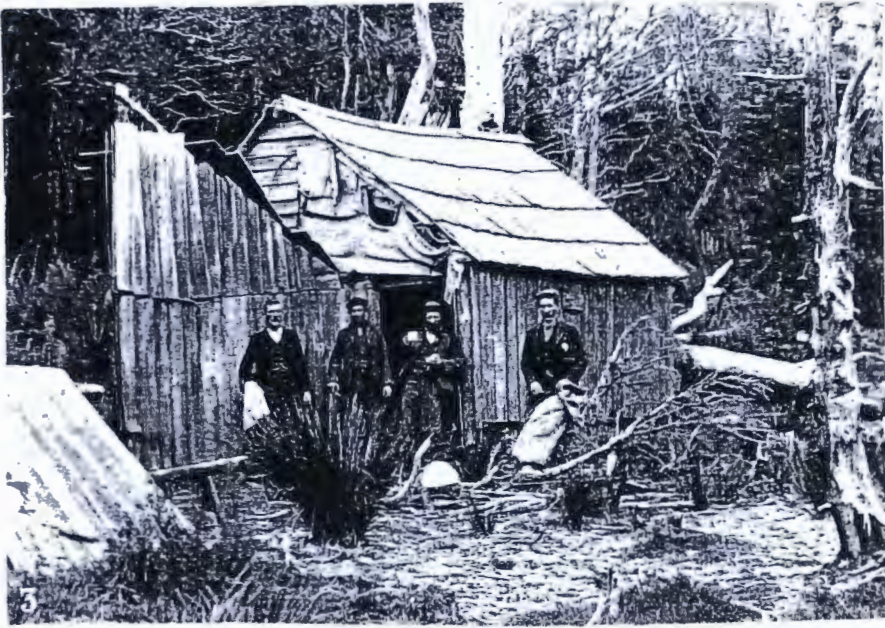


Figure 20: Piner' Camp, Cradle Valley

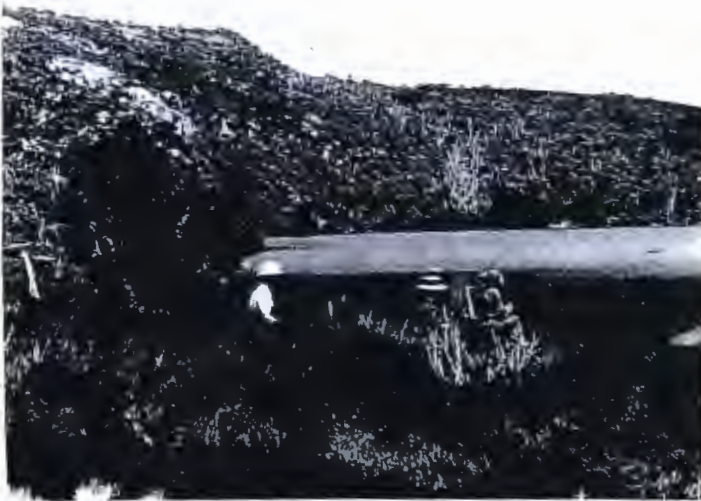


Figure 21: Gustav Weindorfer

Figure 22: Weindorfer-Smith trip, 1910-11



(a) Looseleaf Creek Camp



(b) Miss Carruthers, Kate and Gustav Weindorfer, Lake Carruthers

Hounslow Heath, identified numerous species of flora, and tried to 'impress upon the memory the characters of this new and interesting plant association'.²²¹

Weindorfer's accounts, together with photos, in the *Weekly Courier*²²² and *Victorian Naturalist* were valuable publicity for his long-term ambitions. Dorfer used English 'nearest park and garden-like surroundings' descriptions rather than Australian terms to portray the landscape.²²³ In concluding, he drew on the concept of Nature as a book, an idea discussed at length in Chapter 7:

And so ended a botanical tour into the mountains, where every walk appears to be the contents of a book, which stimulates innumerable thoughts and pictures. From the rock, whose weather-worn-surface is covered with mosses and lichens; from the alpine flower-gardens, where the gentle kangaroo grazes with its young, up to the gnarled and stunted pines and gum-trees and the crystal, glittering snow-fields, over which the stately eagle soars, are the leaves of this writing of Nature to be seen. The one will read out of this book more, the other less; but all the art of reading rests in this: to analyze and recognize out of the superabundance of appearances and the individual occurrences the eternal law of the whole the ingenious arrangement of things.²²⁴

In contrast were practical details essential to tourists. such as locations of huts, names of guides and modes of transport.²²⁵

From now until 1922 Weindorfer's plans for a National Park dominated his Cradle existence. What happened that 4 January 1910, when apparently the sun shone, the air was still, and snowdrifts contrasted with a foreground of dolerite rocks while mountain ranges dominated the panoramic background? Weindorfer's *Weekly Courier* articles did not hint at any proposal for a park for the people, these not

²²¹Weindorfer, 'Two Botanists in the Cradle Mountains', p. 219 There is some confusion over mountains, because at different times Mts Kate, Campbell and Emmett were all known as Mt Brown

²²²*Weekly Courier* 22 September 1910 contained a page of Ron Smith's photos of Cradle Mt area

²²³*Weekly Courier* 6 October 1910

²²⁴Weindorfer, 'Two Botanists in the Cradle Mountains', p. 223

²²⁵Huts were at at Dove Valley, Frank Brown's residence at Middlesex station and WM Black's at Fury Creek; Tom Perry, hunter and prospector, was the guide and the Weindorfer's travelled to Middlesex by horse and pagnal or cart while the energetic Smith bicycled

surfacing until Smith's 1936 report of the ascent. Smith wrote that with Mt Buffalo as his model, Dorfer avowed that publicity, an access road and accommodation were the essentials if the Park was to be successful. As for money, Weindorfer's financial proposal was logical: build a chalet and when visitors increased, the government would make a road and the chalet would expand.²²⁶ But politics and international affairs have a habit of thwarting the best intentions. After selecting a site for an accommodation hut at the edge of a pine forest in 1910, the next step was to purchase the proposed site and adjoining King Billy forest. The same year applications were made to the Lands Department but there was some delay before Surveyor Wilks was able to locate the blocks. After a further visit to the area Gustav, Kate and Mrs James Smith each purchased 200 acres. By 1922 Smith's holdings had increased to about 1200 acres.

Weindorfer's actions should not be taken in isolation. Although the scenery of Cradle Mt and Lake St Clair had been long-admired, there were no suggestions for either becoming a national park.²²⁷ After his visit to Barn Bluff, Beattie did not suggest a reserve despite his appreciation of fine mountain scenery. His claim that the Arthur Range, Mt Anne and Lake Pedder were superior perhaps accounted for this hesitation.²²⁸ Prospector JW Lord's 1900 account and EJA's 'Switzerland of the Australia' were indications of Cradle's attractions from the early 1890s. Deloraine's Dr Cole proposed a summer resort and sanatorium for nearby Lake Lea.²²⁹ As well the North Western Tourist Association, NWTa, and individuals such as Wilmot's TJ Clerke organised trips to the area.²³⁰ Locals, mainly from

²²⁶*Advocate* 7 November 1936

²²⁷Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', p. 239 mistakenly asserts that there were suggestions for the Cradle area be reserved in the 1890s.

²²⁸*Examiner* 1 June 1901 for an account of Royal Society lecture

²²⁹For Lord, *Tasmanian Mail* 28 April 1900; for EJA, most probably Dr Addison, *North West Post* 27 February 1907; for Dr Cole, *North West Post* 27 February 1907

²³⁰For Clerke see *North West Post* 27 February 1907; for NWTa see *Examiner* 11 February 1909

Wilmot, such as bushman Ernest Clarke, hunter-pro prospector Tom Perry, Woodhouse and especially Bob Quaile had guided parties into the Valley and onto the mountain. Quaile's introduction stemmed from participation in the search for Bert Hanson in 1905.²³¹ Recognising the tourist potential, he cut a track into Cradle Valley, and erected a hut, Bull Plain Camp, for use by tourist parties.²³² In the summer of 1908-09 Quaile's two parties under the auspices of the NWTAC climbed Cradle.²³³ Within Cradle Valley itself, Quaile used the Dove Valley hut graphically described by Weindorfer.²³⁴ So Quaile was the precursor who continued as a minor but vital part of the Weindorfer-dominated era by providing the main transport, horse and pagnal, for visitors.

Others contributed to highlight Cradle, even if their visions differed from Weindorfer. Dorfer's 1914 promotional article 'On the Roof of Tasmania' enthused about the southern panorama's 'most wonderful intricacies of Nature's boldest architecture, lofty mountain chains and tops ... alternating with yawning abysses and densely wooded valleys'.²³⁵ Still an Austrian at heart, he compared the pure atmosphere with the exhilarating and bracing Alpine air. In this tourist idyll 'cameras, guns, fishing rods are never idle'.²³⁶ It is unclear whether his dream for a national park was heartfelt or a realisation that publicity and improved access would increase his business profits.²³⁷ That year the multi-talented Government botanist, Leonard Rodway and Biology Professor TT Flynn proposed a reserve to prevent King Billy timber leases being granted. Lands Minister Belton deferred further selection until the SPB visited and prepared a report. Unfortunately 'departmental

²³¹For the inquest see *Examiner* 12 September 1905

²³²*North West Post* 27 February 1907

²³³*Examiner* 5 January 1909

²³⁴*North West Post* 27 February 1907 & for Weindorfer's description see 'A Gnome, Holidays in the Cradle Mountains', *Weekly Courier* 6 October 1910

²³⁵*North-West Post* 3 December 1914

²³⁶*North-West Post* 3 December 1914

²³⁷*North-West Post* 3 December 1914

slow-coaches' remained stationary.²³⁸ Surveyor Wilks iterated the need for government road from Middlesex south to the old overland road to the West Coast; combined with decent accommodation, would attract tourists to this 'very fine and picturesque scenery' especially in winter when 'the highlands are even more beautiful than in the summer time.'²³⁹ The area was not proclaimed a scenic areas in 1916, 35,000 acres being withdrawn from selection as a 'proposed reserve'.²⁴⁰ Perhaps Weindorfer was partly responsible, having lobbied government departments such as railways and tourism between 1914 and 1916.

With Kate managing the farm, 'Roland Lea', Dorfer turned his attention in March 1912 to the building of Waldheim or Home in the Forest. Initially, with the help of an experienced splitter, and then alone, Dorfer began splitting timber for house and furniture. Bergman, Giordano and Haygarth²⁴¹ have described the construction phase. The first visitors to arrive at Christmas 1912 were greeted by primitive conditions: a drafty three-roomed building comprising dining and living room and two smaller bedrooms. An enormous fireplace provided warmth, while furniture, such as bunks, chaff bag stretchers and blocks of wood for chairs, was basic. Modes of advertising are unknown, but the pioneers were from Sheffield and Ulverstone. Noteworthy were District Surveyor Wilks, who continually asserted the scenic beauties of the area in his annual reports,²⁴² Dick Brown from nearby Middlesex station and Ron and Selina Smith.

²³⁸*Advocate* 23 August 1921 reprinted details of the 1916 proposal.

²³⁹'Annual Report of the Lands Department for 1914-15', *TPP*, 1915-16, No. 22, p. 17. This was repeated in 'Report of the Surveyor General & Department of Lands and Surveys for 1920-21', *TPP* 1921-22, No. 31, p. 3

²⁴⁰Mosley, 'Aspects of the geography of recreation in Tasmania', p. 219; G Castles, 'Handcuffed volunteers: a history of the Scenery Preservation Board in Tasmania, 1915-1971', BA Hons (Hist) University of Tasmania, 1987, p. 42 & SPB Minutes 19 July 1917, AA 264/1

²⁴¹Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, pp. 30-2 & 36 Giordano, *A Man and an Mountain*, pp. 34-51 & Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, pp. 126-9

²⁴²For an example see 'Annual Report of the Lands Department for 1914-15', *TPP*, 1915-16, No. 22, p. 17

As time, weather and funds permitted, Dorfer added to and improved Waldheim. By 1914 the 'rustic style of split pine' house contained eight rooms and if extra accommodation was required a bunk hut and tents for hire were available.²⁴³ A kitchen stove, amenities such as a ladies room and bathroom, verandahs, woodsheds and stables indicated the nature of the isolated complex. Reroofing, building shelves and cupboards, and hanging doors enhanced its attractiveness and comfort.

Weindorfer's charges of 8/- for daily lodgings and 10/- if guided, restricted Waldheim to those interested in scenery and flora and fauna — normally the educated, and those with sufficient leisure and wealth to undertake the trip. Itineraries varied according to length of stay and weather. Usual items included an ascent of Cradle and possibly Mts Campbell, Hanson, and Barn Bluff, walks to lakes, particularly Dove and Crater, and to Hounslow Heath and Cradle Valley. While there were variations to cater for special interests, botanising, fishing and hunting were major activities. To assist visitors and locals Weindorfer used red markers, a European custom, to indicate the track to Cradle Plateau and Hounslow Heath (1914), the latter cleared by himself.

There was unanimous support that, without improvements to the road to Cradle Valley, the area would remain a largely untouched secret or in Dorfer's words 'rarely to be seen in the world, and pleasures which but few Tasmanians knew of'.²⁴⁴ As elsewhere railways were important in providing access to stepping-off points: Ulverstone and Devonport, both 56 miles away and Sheffield fourteen fewer. From Sheffield or Wilmot horse and cart transported visitors along a metalled road before they had to traverse a bush road which in 1921 was only half a mile to Waldheim.²⁴⁵

²⁴³Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 36 & *Daily Post* 3 December 1914

²⁴⁴*Examiner* 30 July 1921

²⁴⁵*Examiner* 16 July 1921

At the opening of Waldheim, horse and cart transport stopped eight miles short. Then horse and cart or Shank's Pony were the alternatives to reach Cradle Valley.²⁴⁶ Sporadic government and Kentish Council funding helped remedy the situation.²⁴⁷ In his campaigns, Dorfer enlisted a personal friend, HJM Payne, Treasurer and Minister for Agriculture and Railways,²⁴⁸ whose recognition of the tourist potential derived from a visit to Cradle. Unsuccessful lobbying meant that for several years tourists were reliant on Frank Brown of Middlesex station or Tilley of Wilmot for transport to Pencil Pine bridge, four miles from Waldheim.²⁴⁹ Appreciating Cradle's tourist potential, the Kentish Council, particularly Councillor Hitchcock, also manager of the Shepherd and Murphy Mine, lobbied state governments to fund improvements.²⁵⁰ In the aftermath of the Great War, ex-servicemen were employed on the road which by January 1920 was three-quarters of a mile from Waldheim.²⁵¹ In 1921 motor cars, a Citroen, and motor bikes reached Waldheim.²⁵²

Figure 23: Transport to Cradle Valley

²⁴⁶For details of Quaile see 'Proposed Railton-Wilmot Railway: Report of the Royal Commission', *TPP*, 1902, No. 59, p. 7

²⁴⁷In 1911 Public Works Department contributed £50 to a foot bridge over Pencil Pine Creek Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 36 & Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 30, year varies between 1911 & 1912, £18 of the £30 voted was spent, & narrow bridge constructed across the Pencil Pine about a mile below the present one.

²⁴⁸For Payne see S Bennett, 'Herbert James Mockford Payne', *ADB*, Vol. 11, pp. 170-1 & M Roe, 'HJM Payne', pp. 181-6 in A Millar (ed) *The biographical dictionary of the Australian Senate*, Melbourne, 2004 See also PWD 24/7 Kentish Municipality Tracks to Cradle Mt Valley

²⁴⁹Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 33

²⁵⁰Funding arrangements varied with the Kentish Council sometimes the sole contributor eg December 1914 spent £50 and at others were matched £ for £ by the state government

²⁵¹Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, p. 45

²⁵²For Stan Lade's trip with photographer Jack Bennett see *Advocate* 21 November 1985 & Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 67 and for motor bike riders C Hodgson, HJ King and E Bonner see Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, pp. 64 & 72

Figure 23: Transport to Cradle Valley



(a) Horse and cart at Middlesex Station



(b) By Car, 1924

Weindorfer became a permanent resident at Waldheim in 1916 because of the death of Kate in April that year and anti-German hysteria whipped up during the War. Two political developments — the Scenery Preservation Act and the creation of National Park — may have provided solace and hope for the fulfilment of his 1910 vision. Here it is apposite to trace national park development in Tasmania post Scenery Preservation Board.

Campaign for a Reserve

From 1916 until 1921 was a quiet period, possibly because of pre-occupation with the War and a wait-and-see attitude to a national park. Weindorfer's vision precluded the St Clair area until discussions with Clive Lord in 1921. In a sense the south was an afterthought whose inclusion was required to gain approval from southern politicians.²⁵³ Prior to the campaign commencement, an account of the beauties of the northern Reserve and photographs by Tasman Oil Company manager AG Black boosted the area.²⁵⁴ Weindorfer, Emmett and Clive Lord discussed their proposal with Lands Minister Hean in July 1921.²⁵⁵ Aware of unresolved issues from National Park, politicians sought a mechanism which would allow forestry, mining and hunting while still proclaiming a national park. Thus they amended the 1915 Scenery Preservation Act to allow exemption from the original provisions when expedient. Boundaries could be altered and short term leases granted.²⁵⁶ Possibly, but not certainly, the continued lobbying by J McKinley Wilson, Manager of the Mt Pelion Company, and 'unofficial' mining industry advocate, EH Blyth MHA may have been influential.

²⁵³For autobiographical details of Lord see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. 1, p. 128; For Harris, 'Selling Tasmania,' it was not even an afterthought as St Clair was not mentioned in 'Infrastructure Demands — National Parks', pp. 98-102 although its earlier role as a tourist destination is mentioned pp. 108-109

²⁵⁴*Weekly Courier* 19 May 1921

²⁵⁵Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, pp. 48-9

²⁵⁶Scenery Preservation Act 1921, 12 Geo V No 29 Sect 3: and Hean's rationale, 'without its being subject to the drastic regulations that applied to the National-park and other similar reserves.' *TPP* [H of A] 1 Dec 1920 2nd reading

On 25 July 1921 the Field Naturalists launched the campaign in Hobart. Over the next year there were public meetings, often under the auspices of either the Royal Society or a tourist organisation, in Hobart, Launceston and major north west centres. It was a well-orchestrated campaign with lantern slides and photographs, complementing addresses by prominent boosters. Central to the campaign were Dorfer, Emmett, Lord, and Fred Smithies whose contributions will be outlined.²⁵⁷

The Hobart meeting revealed the aims and limitations of the 'national reserve' proposal. Emmett attempted to reduce conflict with politicians by proposing a reserve in which forestry, hunting and mining could occur. Furthermore, the area, 20 miles long by seven wide, was unsuitable for agriculture or pastoralism. To manage parochialism there would be two administrative boards, based in Hobart and Launceston. Emmett urged Tasmania to emulate America and Canada by maximising the tourism potential of scenic reserves and parks. Rodway spoke about flora and fauna, Weindorfer described specific attractions of Cradle country, while slides presented the grandeur of the area. Almost as an afterthought, geologist AN Lewis urged reservation to preserve animals and plants only found elsewhere as fossils for future generations.²⁵⁸

Almost immediately there was newspaper debate. Prominent mining figure Luke Williams' objected to restrictions such as royalties on mining in the proposed reserve.²⁵⁹ Frank Heyward, councillor, architect and bushwalker, suggested that proceeds from timber sales be used to clear and sow grass for native fauna. He

²⁵⁷For a clear description of lantern slides see J Cato, *The Story of the camera in Australia*, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 114-5; for general outlook see Fenton, *A Century Afield*, pp. 111-112

²⁵⁸*Mercury* 26 July 1921, WFD Butler and AV Giblin showed slides of Cradle-Barn Bluff and Lake St Clair areas respectively.

²⁵⁹*Mercury* 27 July 1921; Williams had long been involved in mining; for example in the Blue Tiers circa 1905, see G Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry, 1880-1914', PhD (History) University of Tasmania, 2002, p. 220

compared a park to a museum which preserved for ever native flora and fauna under natural conditions. Then Heyward's attack on utilitarianism that

There are a few people still who love trees and the native bush sufficiently to want a little of it retained unburnt, and retained as a retreat from civilization(?) now and then.²⁶⁰

ran counter to the more pragmatic approach of other proponents.

The *Examiner* described the proposal as a Northern Park, morally owned by Launcestonians, who were the originators of idea.²⁶¹ The notion was strengthened by newspaper concentration on Cradle area rather than elsewhere in The Reserve. Befitting self-help, several meetings, organised by the recently formed Northern branch of the Royal Society, were held in the Launceston Mechanics Institute meeting. This enthusiasm can be regarded as a logical conclusion to nearly three decades of campaigning beginning with the Mole Creek and Zeehan Exploration Association in the 1890s, the NTTA and the Northern Tasmanian League.²⁶² A July meeting elected a Committee to sustain the vision of the northern park. Its members included politician and businessman Tasman Shields, best known for a medal in his honor for prowess in Australian Football; George Perrin, businessman and experienced bushwalker; Fred Smithies, businessman, photographer and active walker, Frank Heyward, and an outsider, American dentist Dr McClinton, the first man to have driven a car to Lake St Clair and used a motor boat on its waters.²⁶³ Along the north-west, the indefatigable Emmett organised meetings with Burnie's HJ Payne, now a Senator, and Devonport Warden HH McFie playing leading roles.

²⁶⁰*Mercury* 30 July 1921. Hobart-born Heyward was President of the Tasmanian Society, northern branch, a precursor of the National Trust. He was a friend of Fred Smithies. For an obituary see *Mercury* 2 July 1942, N Chick, *The Archers of Van Diemen's Land*, Hobart, 1991, pp. 262-3 & biographical index p. 62.

²⁶¹*Examiner* 2 August 1921.

²⁶²For the latter see Harris, 'Selling Tasmania,' pp. 56-58.

²⁶³See *Examiner* 30 July 1921. For biographical detail: for Smithies see J Branagan, *A Great Tasmanian: Frederick Smithies OBE, Frederick Smithies OBE explorer, mountaineer, photographer*, Launceston, [1985]; for Heyward see Harris p. 166.

The latter credited McClinton and Smithies with playing the major roles with Weindorfer and Heyward relegated to secondary players. In later life Smithies came to believe this propaganda claiming that 'little was known of this vast area.[Cradle country] I then resolved to change all this.'²⁶⁴ Support from leading sawmiller FH Haines (see Chapter 9) indicated that a scenic reserve rather than a park was the aim.²⁶⁵ As expected the Kentish Council was unanimous in its support and Devonport strongly so.²⁶⁶

With many arguments echoing the Hobart launch, only new arguments from the north will be considered. Weindorfer's proposal for a breeding ground to restock depleted areas was hypocritical in that he had contributed to the decrease of game around Cradle Valley. He advocated a close season for three years, but it was highly unlikely that he would have forsaken his own activities.²⁶⁷ Aware of the fur industry's objections to a game sanctuary, Lord spoke in general terms of keeping the area for posterity.²⁶⁸ Dorfer, who was negotiating to harvest his King Billy forests, claimed that 'no commercial timber grows anywhere in the vicinity'.²⁶⁹ More correctly he stressed the area's worthlessness or unsuitability for agriculture with grazing only possible on small scattered areas.²⁷⁰ A related but different selling point was scientific usefulness, especially for botanists and geologists, who would benefit from this great outdoors laboratory. Lord suggested the planting and harvesting of spruce trees, allowing the hunting of imported animals²⁷¹ and the stocking of trout to help make the reserve self-sufficient. To garner further support Emmett suggested that only limited finance was required citing the example of

²⁶⁴NS 573/3/3 F Smithies interview by M Bryant, 15 June 1977

²⁶⁵*Examiner* 12 July 1921

²⁶⁶*Examiner* 26 July 1921 & *Advocate* 8 August 1921

²⁶⁷*Examiner* 16 July 1921

²⁶⁸*Examiner* 30 July 1921

²⁶⁹*Examiner* 16 July 1921

²⁷⁰*Examiner* 16 July 1921

²⁷¹Specifically deer. They may have been influenced by similar plans in New Zealand, see Star, 'Native Forest and the rise of preservation in New Zealand', pp. 286-7

National Park which with an annual income of £300 for 40,000 acres had achieved a 'great deal of developmental work'.²⁷² He urged Tasmanians to support the new reserve and cited benefits from Hawaii and especially Canada where tourism was the fourth most important natural resource and contributed £10 million annually to the national coffers.²⁷³ McClinton noted the hydro-electric potential of Lakes but then argued against trapping and burning the countryside.²⁷⁴ Emmett and Lord lamented the burning around Barn Bluff where 'tapestries of green of varying shades, ... [were] marred by great patches of black where the fire-stick has done its nefarious work at the bidding of the coal prospector'.²⁷⁵

There were appeals to state pride: Emmett compared Lake St Clair and Mt Olympus to Switzerland, Weindorfer opined that the Cradle Mountain area contained 'some of the finest Alpine scenery in the world', and 'probably surpasss the magnificence of sections of Yosemite Valley, Crater Lake, and Yellowstone National Parks',²⁷⁶ while later it was regarded as a 'Tasmanian Kosciusko'.²⁷⁷ Emmett claimed that while the reserve was mainly for Tasmanians, it was an effective means of advertising the state nationally.²⁷⁸ Similarly state-proud, Perrin urged all 'to appreciate them [ie nature's gifts] and keep them intact and pretty for they will be one of our greatest assets'.²⁷⁹ Furthermore, Waldheim, '(the Grand Hotel of the Mountains) is ideal, absolutely ideal and so is our host'.²⁸⁰ Through EFB Blyth MHA, the Pelion Mining Co offered the now redundant Pelion Huts for tourists.²⁸¹ Bushwalkers were informed that the reward for a 'not difficult' ascent

²⁷²*Examiner* 12 July 1921

²⁷³*Examiner* 12 July 1921

²⁷⁴*Examiner* 29 July 1921. Smithies also argued against trapping and burning

²⁷⁵*Mercury* 5 January 1922

²⁷⁶*Examiner* 16 July 1921

²⁷⁷*Examiner* 24 March 1922

²⁷⁸*Examiner* 30 July 1921

²⁷⁹Waldheim visitor book, entry for 7 February 1922 by George Perrin

²⁸⁰Waldheim guest book

²⁸¹*Examiner* 12 July 1921

Figure 24: Pelion Huts



of Cradle Mountain was an unspeakable panorama over about a half of Tasmania.²⁸²

With only a small number of visitors, visual images were invaluable in conveying the grandeur of the country to be reserved. Slides and photographs from professionals such as Stephen Spurling and Beattie, talented amateur HJ King and naturalist and walker, Mrs Anne Lindon, were contributors.²⁸³ First-hand trip accounts from Dr McClinton and Fred Smithies were also important components of Launceston meetings.²⁸⁴ They were well attended, and the *Examiner's* reporting ensured the news spread across northern Tasmania.

Assumed and therefore not mentioned was the fact that the Reserve was Crown Land. This meant that there were no prolonged negotiations nor costly buy-backs. Perhaps there was a collective memory of a £200 buyback around Russell Falls to prevent logging operations.²⁸⁵ There were some leases within and adjacent to the Reserve such as Hartnett's Du Cane farm, and a grazing lease at Lake Ayr. These were not important because the government, if so inclined, had the power of revocation.²⁸⁶ More important for the Reserve's subsequent history was the cluster of freehold in Cradle Valley just north of the boundary. Their inclusion was a saga of claim and refutation, of an individual with some political support against a Board, largely powerless, but which was continually lobbied by outsiders.

Many politicians and influential figures visited Cradle Valley. Significant were the 1921-22 Christmas-New Year visit by the Governor Allardyce's daughters Keva and

²⁸²*Examiner* 12 July 1921

²⁸³Her husband, an occasional walker, was Headmaster of Geelong Grammar and The Hutchins School

²⁸⁴*Examiner* 16 & 30 July 1921

²⁸⁵Scenery Preservation Board Minutes, AA 264/Vol 1 7 June 1916

²⁸⁶For instances under the Crown Lands Act 1911, Sect. 129 permitted resumption as did the Lands resumption Act, 1910.

Figure 25: Pelion West (Beattie photo)



Figure 26: Hartnett Falls, Mersey River (Spurling photo)



Vera and a ministerial party including Sir Elliott Lewis²⁸⁷ and son Arndell, JB Hayes and Chester Lord. Fortuitously for the road improvement their vehicle was bogged at the appropriately named Black Bog. Invaluable publicity was derived when prominent Launceston photographer, HJ King, reached Waldheim on bike. Although probably preplanned, Weindorfer's pigeon post was a philatelist and publicist's dream.²⁸⁸

With developments at National Park behind them, the SPB meeting of 29 March 1922 was crucial. To secure success Emmett cited the aforementioned ministerial visit and the need to adopt the 1921 Scenery Preservation Act to allow grazing, mining and forestry. LS Bruce argued that the 'bulk of Tasmanians had no idea what a wonderful asset' was the area from Cradle to just south of Lake St Clair. With consensus that a reserve, not a park, was favoured, Surveyor General Counsel added his support.²⁸⁹ Before the next meeting, the Scenic Reserve was promulgated on 11 May 1922. The Governor-in-Council approved of the 158,000 acres or thereabouts in the County of Lincoln.²⁹⁰ The boundary's straight lines did not follow natural features and the omission of key areas such as Pelion Plains and Mt Oakleigh and Cradle Valley reflected the influence of pastoral, hunting and timber lobby groups. In July the SPB decided, subject to finance, on two administrative boards, with the line of demarcation being the Wallace River. Each

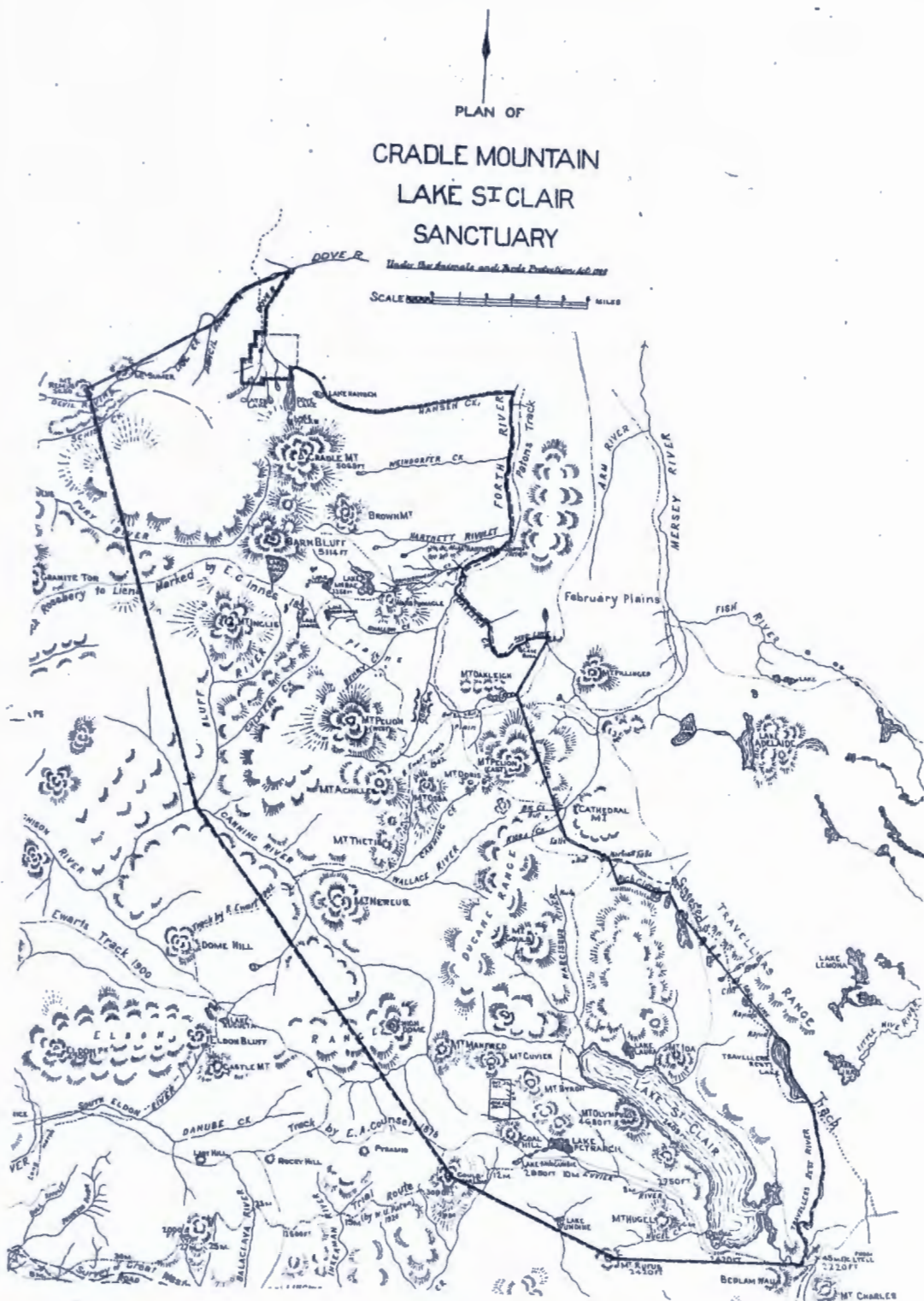
²⁸⁷For Lewis' visit to Cradle 17 to 22 February 1922 see Lewis Papers, NS 228/1/42 but very heavy rain, 149 points on one night, prevented much sightseeing. On the train trip he met Tasman Oil Company Directors, Dr GR Plante & RA Stoneham at Waldheim

²⁸⁸Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 71 & Branagan, *A Great Tasmanian: Frederick Smithies OBE*, p. 57

²⁸⁹*Examiner* 30 March 1922 Counsel admitted that there 'would be a great deal of opposition, because people desired to go on the land, for prospecting, and mining was an important industry'.

²⁹⁰Finally there was success with a Scenic Reserve gazetted, *TGG* 16 May 1922 exempt from Scenery Preservation Act, Section 15, the area: 158,000 acres or thereabouts in the County of Lincoln: Commencing at the summit of Mt Remus and bounded by a south-easterly line to Mt Cuvier thence by a south-westerly line to Gould Sugar-loaf thence by a south-easterly line to Mt Rufus thence by an easterly line to the junction of the Travellers' Rest River with the Derwent River thence by the Travellers rest river and the eastern shores of the Travellers Rest Lake to the most northern point thereof thence by a north-westerly line to Mt Ida thence by a north-westerly line (passing over Mt Pelion East) for a distance of 27 miles or thereabouts and thence by a westerly line to the point of commencement.

Figure 27: Map of Scenic Reserve



board was to be composed of representatives from government bodies — SPB, Mines, Public Works, Lands, Forestry, Fisheries and Tourism — Royal Society, city and municipal councils, Workers Educational Association and Field naturalists.²⁹¹

Cradle existence

Dorfer had other more mundane activities than advancing his dream. Until Kate's death in 1916, he divided his time between lowland farming and alpine living. Daily and seasonal rhythms, much influenced by the weather, gave order and coherence to life. Weekly visits to collect mail and supplies from Middlesex station maintained contact with the outside world and provided social interaction essential to such a gregarious person. Correspondence both heartened and saddened: receiving news of his mother's death, two days later his poignant diary entry read 'mother's funeral many thousands of miles away'.²⁹² Similarly, he noted the outbreak of war: 'Got news of the great European war'. No doubt there was wry amusement when on one visit to Middlesex station, Dorfer heard of his own death.²⁹³

As well there were the visits to collect guests or retrieve 'lost dogs' from Pencil Pine, Middlesex station, and Fury Gorge. Other social visits included trips to Mt Inglis mines, the Fury (mistakenly called Brougham) Gorge, Cradle Camp to see Ron Smith and various hunters camps such as Dick Nichols between Cradle Valley and Wilmot. At the last mentioned there were visits for meals and overnight stays with locals especially the Hitchcocks, Connells, Glovers and Arnolds. Here he obtained supplies from GJ Coles, the pioneer of the continent-wide retailing chain.

²⁹¹*Examiner* 6 July 1922 for The Reserve Boards; The Mt Field example has been given, this chapter while the Mountain Park Act 1906 6^o Edw VII No 11 provided examples of regulations for Mt Wellington

²⁹²Weindorfer diary 14 and 16 January 1916

²⁹³Weindorfer's diary 17 December 1917

Dorfer's sociability and ability to mix with all classes was a decided asset as host of Waldheim, even if not always to standard as 'a gentleman, a good cook, a famous mountaineer, hunter, and botanist.'²⁹⁴ Most — whether hunter, prospector, stockman, scientist, tourist, bushwalker and politician, male or female — were welcomed. Saint Dorfer he was not. Prospector, pastoralist and bushman George Sloane was a frequent target of his quick and at times caustic wit. AG Black, manager of the Mt Inglis mine, was refused permission to travel across Dorfer's land because of a 'rather pronounced antagonistic attitude towards all mining concerns operating in the district.'²⁹⁵ Women found Dorfer 'blonde-bearded, blue eyed, tall and athletic,' particularly attractive, with several confiding marital difficulties to him.²⁹⁶

There were a range of domestic chores, with cutting timber and carting firewood, and cooking, especially time consuming. To reduce food costs and ensure variety, Dorfer planted fruits such as currants, raspberries, rhubarb, cherries and plums. Fresh meat was mostly game, with Dorfer adding variety by preparing roo pudding and making *Leibstucke* and salting surplus meat. Thus hunting either alone or with partners such as the Connells was a frequent activity. Collecting sphagnum moss for bed mattresses was a quaint task. When domesticity was temporarily tamed, relaxing in front of a fire with the pipe of repose, writing letters or reading were alternatives. Dorfer fashioned skis which greatly assisted travel across snow-covered plains. Conditions often were severe as illustrated by getting frostbitten toes.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁴Tasmanian Government Tourist Department, *Complete Guide to Tasmania*, Hobart, 1920, p. 157

²⁹⁵PWD 24/7 Kentish Municipality, AC Fenton, Mt Inglis Tin Mines to Mines Minister 1 February 1923

²⁹⁶Sutton, 'Gustav Weindorfer', pp. 34-38 & GF Bergman, 'Gustav Weindorfer - Some biographical Notes', pp. 192-4

²⁹⁷Weindorfer diary 14 July 1914

Dorfer maintained and expanded his earlier scientific interests. He kept records for the Meteorological Department, and published results of his studies of flora and fauna. The legendary preservationist was not averse to modifying the landscape by transplanting natives such as waratah, hakeas, orites and bluegum, and introducing trout, brown and sebago, into nearby lakes.²⁹⁸ He was an avid reader, and disciplined, even terse, diarist. His records were a mixture of the mundane and the unusual, such as references to stock riders arriving at Middlesex station for mustering and noting a partial solar eclipse. To ameliorate isolation Dorfer corresponded with a wide range of acquaintances on a professional and social basis. Visits from and to nearby residents were a welcome break to a somewhat ordered way of life. Correspondents included scientists, such as Dr Fritz Noetling, interned during war years; Professor Flynn; and his family, (via America, during the war years).

Maintaining Waldheim was akin to walking a financial tightrope. Dorfer supplemented income by selling skins, supplying roo, working in Haines' timber mill and agisting stock. His appointment as census collector permitted him a welcome southward trip to Du Cane, and supplied some extra funds.

South of Cradle

Life continued throughout The Reserve. Elsewhere access and accommodation were equally important, although conditions in the south, while primitive, were marginally better than the north's. The road from Marlborough to Derwent Bridge, by no means a highway, was in sound condition compared with that stretch from Derwent Bridge to the Lake. The McClinton party, first to motor to the Lake in 1915, provided important detail about conditions.²⁹⁹ In 1918 Hobart and West

²⁹⁸ Attempts to introduce sebago and brown trout in Lake Carruthers failed, see diary 13 June, 18 & 22 November 1916

²⁹⁹ *Weekly Courier* 21 January & 4 February 1915

Coast businessmen campaigned for the overland link to be improved from a pedestrian track to a motor road, despite the recurring official excuse that limited usage did not warrant large expenditure. As the 1920s approached, governments were more sympathetic with funding.³⁰⁰ Sir Elliott Lewis's advocacy of this proposal sounded the death knell of the rail link first mooted nearly thirty years before.³⁰¹ Surveyor General Counsel still maintained contrary views, asserting that opening-up mineral country was the real priority, and, despite his position as SPB head, failed to mention the tourist potential.³⁰² As always northern newspapers doubted that such a route was warranted, with their support depended on a northern link via the Great Lake.³⁰³ In contrast, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works concluded that the connection with 'Tasmania's lost province' should be thought of as an addition to the link from the capital to St Clair.³⁰⁴ In 1920 W Paton, holder of the exotic sounding position, Government Explorer of Roads, proceeded with marking a line, which in many ways was Burgess's high-level route up the Cuvier Valley (see Chapter 3).³⁰⁵ The report stressed that St Clair district, 'having no superior, from the scenic point of view, in the State, nor probably in the Commonwealth', would become more accessible for tourists, and grazing between the Lake and Cuvier Valley would benefit.³⁰⁶ This was not to be, and Colin Pitt had to make another survey in 1922³⁰⁷ which followed the Linda or Overland

³⁰⁰ Examples included 'Ministerial Statement for Minister for Lands & Works & Agriculture JB Blyth', *TPP* 1918, No. 36 p. 21 funding proposals for 1918 £1000 for St Clair to Gormanston track; 'Ministerial statement for Works, 1920', *TPP* 1920-21, No. 37, p. 15 Pearces to Derwent Bridge £300, Nive Bridge to Pearces £600' & p. 23 £15,000 for road to St Clair & thence Gormanston

³⁰¹ *Mercury* 8 April 1918

³⁰² 'Report of Dept of Lands & Surveys for 1918-19', *TPP* 1919-20, No. 34, p. 3

³⁰³ *Examiner* 20 April 1920, *Daily Telegraph* 7 April 1920

³⁰⁴ 'Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works: Lake St Clair to Gormanston Road proposal', *TPP* 1920, No. 12, p. 1

³⁰⁵ For details see *Mercury* 15 January & 10 February 1920 & *World* 13 March 1920; Harris, 'Selling Tasmania', pp. 137-8; Paton's comments in Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works: Lake St Clair to Gormanston Road proposal', *TPP* 1920, No. 12, p. 3 & passim through newspapers for example, *Examiner* 8 January 1921

³⁰⁶ 'Lake St Clair to Gormanston Road Proposal', *TPP*, 1920-21, No. 12, p. 3

³⁰⁷ *ZDH* 28 January & 11 February 1920 for Paton's survey of St Clair to Gormanston section

Track. Work began in 1928 and in 1932 the Lyell Highway was opened. During the intervening period various governments continued to improve the road for tourists to St Clair.³⁰⁸

In 1908 tourists were informed of the two bedroomed and dining room accommodation-house at the Lake. Now brown trout 'said to have been ... up to 20lbs' in the Narcissus and Cuvier Rivers were additional attractions.³⁰⁹ In the absence of a caretaker at the house, vandalism occurred and its burning down was an ignominious end. This fate, however, provided an opportunity for Mrs Pearce of Clarence River to offer food, bedding and transport.³¹⁰

The importance of the Central Reserve waxed and waned. Hunting remained prominent and from 1911 grazing began around Lake Ayr. Some held high hopes for mining: the perennial optimist Hartnett asserted that visitors 'would hear the chime of church bells' on their next visit to the Wolfram Mine.³¹¹ More importantly continued publicity about shale oil and mainland companies exploration in the Reserve kept alive hopes of speculators and politicians. Mining caused the Lorinna to Wolfram Mine and Pelion Plateau track to be added to existing ones. Walkers, miners, hunters and stockmen used the new route. With improvements to the northern access to Cradle Valley, the Razorback Track to the Barn Bluff region was less frequently used because of steep grades.

Walkers increased, although to no great number. With tents cumbersome and heavy, most used miners' and hunters' camps and huts. Sites included those at Dove Valley and Connell's hut, while the Barn Bluff mining field included Swallow's hut

³⁰⁸Report of the Secretary for Public Works for 1920-21', *TPP*, 1921-22, No. 45, p. 5

³⁰⁹*Handbook of Tasmania*, 1908, Hobart, 1908, p. 109

³¹⁰Tasmanian Government Tourist Department, *Complete Guide to Tasmania*, Hobart 1922, p. 150. Hartnett & Clark found the building dilapidated in 1912.

³¹¹*Weekly Courier* 8 June 1920

at Lake Windemere and those at Commonwealth Creek. There were at least two, possibly more, mining huts at Pelion Plains, with two Hartnett camps at Pelion East and Du Cane. Hartnett and Nichols each had a hut north of Lake St Clair. Throughout there were a number of other huts, predominantly snarers', which remained hidden to all but a few. Most travellers used guides with Hartnett, sometimes assisted by Dan Davies, prominent. Word of mouth accounts of trips from the Upper Mersey to St Clair by the Perrin clan extended people's knowledge of the area. Spurling produced probably the first movies of St Clair in 1914 when accompanied by Hartnett and Perrin. *Weekly Courier* and *Tasmanian Mail* trip details and especially photos by Beattie, Spurling, King and others gave invaluable publicity.³¹²

As previously mentioned, the Reserve's natural resources, such as native grasses, fauna and minerals, continued to be exploited. With widespread plans to transform the island's manufacturing industry, there were more studies of potential hydro-electricity sites. In the north the suitability of eastward flowing tributaries of the Forth for supplying power to the Barn Bluff mining region was noted. More important was the continued examination of St Clair already mooted as a potential source of power. District Surveyor C Selby Wilson estimated its catchment to be double that of the Shannon River, but added that an accurate assessment of water flow was required.³¹³ Whether this was an independent conclusion or a reiteration of the views of metallurgist, inventor and visionary JH Gillies, managing director of Complex Ores company, is unknown. What is important is that Gillies preferred development of St Clair to Great Lake because of a 'greater chance of extension' and because it was a more reliable and larger water supply than the Great Lake. Using

³¹²For example Beattie's photos of Mts Byron and Cuvier in *Weekly Courier* 20 April 1916; McClinton's trip to St Clair January and February 1916 & Trip to Tasmania's highest Tableland, *Weekly Courier* 8 June 1920

³¹³Dept of Lands & Surveys Report for 1908-09', *TPP*, 1909, No. 21, p. 17

Rahbek's figures, Gillies argued that there was 80,000hp running to waste from St Clair, that the transmission line was 20 mile shorter so saving £20,000 in costs.³¹⁴ In the end Waddamana harnessed Great Lake waters to provide cheap power for Gillies' zinc extraction process at North West Bay's Electrona.³¹⁵ The Hydro-Electric Department conducted some studies but their utilisation of the lake's potential awaited a later phase of state development.³¹⁶

The Scientists

As in former periods, amateur and professional scientists gained valuable publicity for The Reserve. Botany and geology remained ascendant, with zoology and meteorology becoming noteworthy. Improved accessibility, the formation of the Field Naturalists and growing public awareness of native flora and fauna enhanced the area's appeal for scientists. Over the spring and summer of 1907-8, Geoffrey Smith visited Lake St Clair. The Fellow of New College, Oxford, studied many aspects of the island's natural environment, but especially its fresh-water life. Without the services of Lake Country shepherd, Walter Davie, Smith declared the journey to have been impossible.³¹⁷ To his disappointment, at depths of twenty to seventy fathoms dredging produced 'fine reddish mud, absolutely destitute of life' and shallow water yielded little more. Absence of the Anaspides so prevalent in the Great Lake was a further cause of chagrin. Not all was negative, with tow-nets obtaining floating plankton.³¹⁸ The Englishman applied his ample powers of description to native fauna and flora and postulated theories about separation from the mainland. Smith was captivated by the 'wild grandeur of its scenery' and the

³¹⁴'Complex Ores Bill 1909 (Private)' Report of Select Committee', *TPP* 1909, No. 38, pp. 4-13 & 30 for Gillies comments and p. 37 for Rahbek's figures; for biographical information see A Knight & A Smith, 'James Hynds Gillies', *ADB* Vol 9, pp. 9-10

³¹⁵AJ Gillies, *Tasmania's struggle for Power*, Burnie, 1984

³¹⁶Hydro-Electric Department Report for 1917-18', *TPP*, 1918-19, No. 27, p. 13

³¹⁷G Smith, *A Naturalist in Tasmania*, Oxford, 1909, p. 92

³¹⁸Smith, *A Naturalist in Tasmania*, Oxford, 1909, pp. 100-101

opportunities for science in that vast outdoor laboratory of Nature.³¹⁹ On his return to England, Smith had lantern slide exhibitions in London, possibly of the 'deep and picturesque' St Clair, and wrote several scientific papers.³²⁰

Tourism promotion and newspaper reports stressed that Cradle country was a botanical wonderland.³²¹ With newspaper reports and publication in the *Victorian Naturalist*, the Weindorfer-Smith and Weindorfer-Sutton expeditions were forerunners to subsequent activity. Weindorfer's reputation was such that by 1909 he was nominated a Fellow of Tasmania's Royal Society. His diaries and correspondence are replete with references to various aspects of botany, especially identification and collecting. The 1915-16 visit by noted scientists, Leonard Rodway, Professor Flynn, Drs Benson and Officer perhaps was the highpoint of such expeditions. They collected specimens, sounded Crater and Dove Lake and studied the geology of the area. Simultaneously, Giblin and Butler measured heights of Barn Bluff and Cradle Mt.³²² Of this party Rodway was most active and is remembered today by Lake Rodway under the eastern flank of Cradle Mt.

In his tentative observations, Dr Benson acknowledged previous workers such as Waller and Johnston, and described major geological formations. He noted location of the formations, their composition and possible mineralogical and topographical outcomes. Prominent features of cretaceous dolerite were the caps on Mts Brown, Barn and Cradle. Possibly Benson's most important conclusions were identification of permo-carboniferous rocks associated with coal and the glacial features of the Cradle area. He observed that ice flow directions were determined by existing

³¹⁹Smith, *A Naturalist in Tasmania*, Oxford, 1909, p. 126

³²⁰GW Smith, *Geoffrey Watkins Smith*, Oxford, 1917, p. 18 for lantern slides, 143 for St Clair, & p. 152 for papers.

³²¹Weindorfer, 'Two Botanists in the Cradle Mountains', p. 216

³²²Weindorfer Diary 23 December 1915; *PPRST* 1917 pp. 1-5 for heights; Hutchinson, Giblin and Butler had previously determined altitude of Ben Lomond, *PPRST*, 1913, pp. 5-13

vallies both east to the Forth and west of Cradle Mt down the Fury Gorge, also noted by Rodway. Other features included the striking Cradle Cirque and Crater Lake which was the southern end of a cirque wall.³²³

Conclusion

In achieving limited success of a reserve rather than a national park, supporters had drawn unconsciously or otherwise on models of park creation from elsewhere. They also benefited from transport developments such as expansion of railways and increased popularity of outdoor recreation. In other ways the achievement of parks and reserves was even more remarkable in surviving the Great War which absorbed much of Tasmania's energies. Only the brave could predict the future although there were some trends for the discerning. Angling and bushwalking on the mainland had been dominated by individuals, but some groups had developed. Thus it was possible that walking would become increasingly an organised group activity. The prospect of an improved motor road to the West Coast bode well for increasing visitor numbers to St Clair as did similar developments in the north. The Reserve's immediate future seemed likely to be linked with mining, especially the much vaunted shale oil exploration, new mineral finds or improved technology which would allow reworking of old fields. A potential threat to The Reserve was the expansion of pastoralism, especially on the Pelion Plains. The state's demand for hydro-electricity could also impinge on Lake St Clair and possibly on the Upper Mersey River. Possibly the key to The Reserve's long-term survival was a transformation of general attitudes. There was much scope for that. Official ignorance of topographical features as exemplified by inaccurate maps, especially of the central reserve, contrasted with that of hunters and prospectors. Thus it was

³²³WN Benson, 'Notes on the Geology of the Cradle Mountain District', *PPRST*, 1916, pp. 29-43

understandable that to the majority the area was a *terra incognita*, despite increasing publication of photos, as was the concept of parks.

From the Mt Field experience and with composition of Boards discussed within two months of The Reserve being created, it is certain that regulations would be promulgated.³²⁴ However, Emmett's enthusiasm for tourism aside, government parsimony was likely to make this later rather than sooner. Tasmania had recognised that 'Nature plants her treasures in out-of-the-way places',³²⁵ such as Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair area. but boundaries did not follow natural features. Despite the influence of hunting and farming groups, there was potential for such alterations. Another portent was the recently created Animals and Birds Protection Board which had the potential to alter existing land use.

³²⁴The Mt Field example has been given earlier this chapter, while the Mountain Park Act 1906 6^o Edw VII No. 11 provided further examples of regulations for Mt Wellington; *Examiner* 6 July 1922

³²⁵*Tasmanian Mail* 20 May 1899

CHAPTER SIX

PASTORALISM

High-land runs are 'most appreciated in dry Summers — as when everything down below is parched up these upland pastures are in their prime.'¹
District Surveyor HP Sorell, 1868

As discussed earlier, the search for pastures was the catalyst for the discovery of both ends of the reserve. Within a decade or two of European sighting, livestock grazed on native grasses whose evolutionary history had not envisaged such pressure. In general, but not always, grazing was transhumant. Until the late 19th century HP Sorell's above quoted assertion of the value of high country runs was valid. Then with introduced grasses replacing native varieties, McIntosh Reid's assessment that 'the native grasses of the highlands are in their best condition when the artificial grasses on the lowlands are withered and lacking nutritive value'² was pertinent. A small number of stockkeepers and shepherds remained with the livestock for the entire time, with a larger number assisting with the droving up and down and mustering. This chapter discusses the individuals and organisations associated with pastoralism, their habits and pastoral practices and the periods when depasturing occurred. Some tentative environmental observations are offered. As well, the links between owners and shepherds, and other Reserve users is noted

The situation around Lake St Clair was different from that in and contiguous to Cradle Valley. Livestock grazing dates from the late 1830s, about seventy years earlier than in the north. In the latter, however, the Van Diemen's Land Company

¹TPP 1868, No. 30, 'Survey Districts - Crown Lands', p. 13

²A. McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, 1919, Mines Department Geological Survey Bulletin No. 30, p. 20

and later the Fields ran cattle on Middlesex Plains from the early 1830s. In both areas wild cattle may have been the first discoverers, but only in the south did human occupation follow shortly afterwards. (See Chapter 2) Grazing around Cradle and Lake Windemere occurred during the route wars. There is a remote possibility that escapees from herds belonging to the Fields and Howells may have visited Pelion Plains in the Central Reserve. (See Chapter 4) With the construction of routes to the west in the 1890s, knowledge of potential grazing areas became more widespread.

Reconstruction of this land use is problematic. While advertisements for disposal of Crown Land provide details about location, period, previous owners/lessees, terms and in some cases a brief summary of the lease area, the personal voice is absent. As tracing the path of individual lots is extremely time consuming and beyond the scope of this work, a summary is obtained by taking random samples. Only in exceptional circumstances, such as the WJT Clarke-Denison dispute discussed in Chapter 3, does the official record offer insight into individual motivation. Occasional published observations from visitors, including governors, prospectors and surveyors, are useful supplements. Diaries are rare, especially from the stockriders and shepherds, who as a class were illiterate or semi-literate. Unusual are the diaries and records of Weindorfer and RE Smith which provide insight into Cradle pastoral operations and that of JFF Kerr, son of John Kerr, businessman, pastoralist and one of the 'Patriotic Six', relating to the Marlborough district.³ The Pelion Plains tapestry is more intricate with a number of oral accounts from participants or observers.

³AOT, NS 234/9 & 11 & 234/17/4 for R Smith letters, & 234/19 for Weindorfer papers. For the Diaries of John Francis Forrester Kerr, January 1844 to June 1846. Thanks to RD Kerr Chittaway Point, New South Wales March 1993 The 'Patriotic Six' were John Kerr, William Kermode, Thomas Gregson, Charles Swanston, Michael Fenton and Richard Dry, who resigned from the Legislative Council over Governor Wilmot's attempts to raise revenue to support the penal system

Lake St Clair

We have seen in Chapter 2 that wild cattle which ventured beyond Lake St Clair, preceded official exploration. By 1837, only two years after Frankland's discovery of St Clair, sheep were grazing between the Derwent and Frenchmans Cap. As with the situation on the Central Plateau, cheap land and convict labour, and abundant well-watered grazing country made the St Clair area desirable for low-country graziers whose summer pastures needed resting. Debate over pastoral suitability between graziers and government officials, the focus of Chapter 3, continued into the twentieth century, although internal dissonances abounded.⁴

Success was often elusive and fickle, with fortune bestowing unequal favours on individual pastoralists. Usually it was a combination of factors rather than one single cause which shaped the result. Some failed in times of economic depression when financially overextended individuals and banks called in credit.⁵ In other cases death of a business partner or owner precipitated a downfall. Following the death of William Henry Dixon of *Kinvarra*, his partner, James Alvez Thomson, defaulted on payments and their land at Marlborough was auctioned.⁶ Shrewd businessmen such as Police Constable James Clark and WJT Clarke bought when the market was at its nadir and then reaped their reward when the cycle turned.⁷ Some influences, such as weather, crucial to outcomes were beyond human control.

⁴For the debate which continued into the 20th century see for example WR Bell's pessimistic views of the Vale of Rasselas see *Examiner* 29 April 1881; for GWR Cawthorne's optimism about King William Plains see *ZDH* 21 March 1901

⁵JFF Kerr had to sell stock, leases and Hamilton properties when his father John Kerr suffered financial reversal in the 1840s depression.

⁶*HTC* 28 August 1847; Thomson was son of Scotsman George Thomson of *Charlie's Hope* near Plenty

⁷Following WM Orr's death from a horse accident, WJT Clarke bought 23,000 acres for £14,000, £9,000 below the Crown minimum price for waste lands. LS Bethel, *The Valley of the Derwent*, Hobart, 1961, p. 95

Two of the earliest leases in the Cuvier Valley and west from the Derwent towards the King William range have already been discussed in Chapter 2. Despite the November 1838 warning about 'risks arising from inaccuracy of description', becoming evident in the Clarke dispute, it was not until 1857 that Calder thoroughly surveyed the Cuvier Valley.⁸ In 1843 leases at the Wentworth Hills, the holdings of merchant-pastoralist WA Bethune at Laughing Jack, and two blocks, on the east bank of the Derwent near Lake St Clair,⁹ indicated the occupation of land within and adjacent to The Reserve. Sometimes land occupation was linear, sometimes leapfrogging but generally trended westward with the exception that Dawson's Road provided access to selections on the southern Navarre and King William Plains.¹⁰

While the Denison Government was happy to outlay funds for surveying and access because of expected returns, there were always official doubts about long-term viability of grazing. In 1852 Calder informed the Select Committee on the Survey Department that land

in the neighbourhood of the Derwent was very good; as I went to the west it deteriorated very much. The greater part [about 10-11,000 of 17,000 acres] is not fit for rental.¹¹

Given this unsuitability, surveyors Calder, King and Gell proposed large lots, 2,700 to 3,500 acres, to ensure each lease contained some suitable grass country.¹² Yet WJT Clarke, Henric Nicholas and T Stanfield disproved sceptics such as Calder

⁸LSD 1/54/85 Correspondence between Calder & Cotton August 1857

⁹HTG 27 October 1843, Bethune's holdings had been occupied for 6 years, the two blocks were 640 acres each

¹⁰HTG 8 September 1846 for examples of approaches from the Derwent-Florentine area

¹¹'Report of the Select Committee on the Survey Department', *TPP* [LC] 1852, No. 59, p. 29

¹²'Report of the Select Committee on the Survey Department', *TPP* [LC] 1852, No. 59, pp. 29-30

who thought the area would 'long remain uncolonised'.¹³ Despite his long colonial experience, Calder's error of judgment was yet another example of surveyor-explorers misreading the landscape. Perceptions varied according to seasonal conditions and many government officials obtained only a snapshot of the area, whereas pastoralists, and particularly shepherds, had a longer time-frame. There were mitigating circumstances as some pastoralists, notably WJT Clarke, stretched regulations by exceeding the leased area, thus increasing chances of stock survival

Nevertheless, grazing persisted and by 1860 Gould thought that with better access, inspection before purchase would be the norm rather than reliance on official advertisements or word of mouth. He believed the area compared favourable with nearby eastward runs, because it was well-drained and contained fine grasses intermixed with coarse buttongrass; the altitude, 2,500 to 3,000 feet, was the principal objection. Gould anticipated swift occupation, especially if expected mineral discoveries eventuated.¹⁴ Many concurred — John King of *Glen Dhu*, — erstwhile Hamilton Municipal Warden; William Langdon, ex-naval captain of *Montacute*, near the Travellers Rest River; WJT Clarke from beyond Lake Dixon to King William Plains and the St Clair Basin; John J Butler of Brighton around the Derwent; George Stokell in the Vale of Cuvier; at Lake Dixon, James Whyte and Thomas Horne.¹⁵ Yet not all government officials became sanguine. District surveyor GC

¹³Calder to Col Sec, 25 January 1841 CSO 8/30/489 & S Franks, 'Land exploration in Tasmania, 1824-1842', MA (History), University of Tasmania, 1959, p. 205

¹⁴'A report of the Western country by Mr Gould', *TPP*, [H of A] 1860, No. 4, p. 4

¹⁵*HTG* 9 June 1863; for King was also Chairman of the Hamilton Road Trust see *TGG* 11 May 1896; in 1856 a John King, was lessee of *Hunter's Hill*, Ouse, *HTG* 8 April 1856 & for Langdon, see T Jetson, 'Master Mariner and Master of Montacute', *PPTHRA*, Vol. 41 (4), December 1994, pp. 221-240; Lands of Tasmania', *TPP* [H of A] 1866, No 27, p. 49; for Clarke and Butler see *HTG* 1 July 1862; for Stokell see *HTG* 9 June 1863; for Whyte 'Statistics of Tasmania for 1863', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No 17, p. 49 and for Kisson and Horne see 'Lands of Tasmania', *TPP* [H of A] 1866, No 27, p. 49

Smith believed that it was 'impossible to pasture either sheep or cattle with profit' on buttongrass country. Good quality grasses could be introduced but only with large expenditure, which was unlikely when capitalists could obtain 8 or 10% on their funds without risk.¹⁶ Thus most graziers only outlaid small sums. Costs of labour — wages, accommodation and food — were minimal; so too were those associated with major human landscape modification — vegetation altered through burning off, minor drainage and felling trees for firewood, building huts and fencing. It is almost impossible to estimate returns but long-time civil servant HM Hull's figures offer clues. He claimed that the Fields made from £12-£16 a beast on fat cattle and the profit from sheep was 2/6 to 4/6 a head.¹⁷ By the 1880s King and William Orr, prominent in the Lake St Clair Mining Association, had replaced WJT Clarke on runs at the Clarence and fronting the Derwent and St Clair basin, while remnants of the Clarke empire survived further eastward on the lower Central Plateau.¹⁸ In 1883 William Jones of Oatlands had become WJT Clarke's successor in bigness by leasing 23,700 acres in Caxton Parish.¹⁹ while FR Evans from Bronte²⁰ and FCK Pitt of Ouse²¹ were newcomers to the area. The latter two maintained their holdings during the 1890s.²²

¹⁶Crown Lands: quantities and descriptions of in Thirteen Survey Districts', *TPP* [H of A] 1868, No 30, p. 9

¹⁷HM Hull, *The experience of forty years in Tasmania*, Launceston, 1859, p. 25 for cattle & also claimed the Fields made this sum on 1000 cattle & p. 24 for sheep

¹⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 16 June 1883; for Orr on Clarke's Mt Charles run by 1887 or earlier see 'Mr Surveyor Counsel's Report on Track from Lake St Clair to the Pieman River', *TPP* [H of A], 1878, No. 47, p. 3; for King still retaining leases see *HTG* 11 January 1887

¹⁹*HTG* 10 April 1883; for biographical details of Jones, see JS Weeding, *A history of the Lower Midlands*, Launceston, 1980, pp. 84-5

²⁰*HTG* 11 January 1887

²¹*HTG* 9 August 1887

²²*HTG* 12 February 1895

In the 20th century while big land holders such as Pitt retained leases and freehold summer runs in the vicinity of the Dewent and St Clair,²³ smaller Upper Derwent Valley farmers began replacing the pastoral princes. Lessees of the thousand acre lot at Lake Petrarch — R Stock, and WG and J Jenkins all from the Dee and Herb Pearce — illustrate this point.²⁴ In part this retreat from the high country was due to the introduction of sub-clover, sinking of bores and use of superphosphate which increased the stock-carrying capacity of home farms. The gradual decline of the Lake Country shepherd and abandonment of supposedly marginal frontier land were other factors. The small farmers had lower operating margins and their rudimentary lifestyle required modest sums in comparison with the pastoral princes. The Pearce families who leased and owned large areas of land from Bronte to the Navarre Plains and Guelph River west of St Clair²⁵ became synonymous with the region. Based at Mt Charles, Derwent Bridge, Clarence River, Bronte, the Dee, Strickland and Black Bobs, the Pearce clan contained many superb bushmen, by turns graziers, snarers and forest workers. Their link with the St Clair area ended with the sale of Mt Charles in the early 1990s. Surprising lessees were Paddy Hartnett and Ted Clarke with their temporary licence around Lake St Clair in 1912. While inspired by their pioneering November 1910 trip, their motives remain unknown for droving livestock overland was not their forte. Whatever, the connection was shortlived as fellow Liena resident EA Bullock took over on April Fools day 1912.²⁶

²³*TGG* 26 September 1906 & 5 November 1912

²⁴*HTG* 5 November 1929 & for Pearce *HTG* 4 March 1929 & 16 May 1922 for Jenkins. In 1922 N Clark of Elderslie, Jenkins and JW Triffitt of Strickland occupied land near St Clair, with Jenkins and Herb Pearce also at Lake Petrarch. As well the Pearce's ran stock on the Navarre Plains *HTG* 20 November 1922

²⁵In 1920 in Saltfleet Parish and Lake Petrarch alone the Pearce's rented 12,740 acres, *TG* 9 March 1920

²⁶For Hartnett & Clarke see *TGG* 23 January 1912 for their 1,000 acre lease & Bullock *TGG* 21 May 1912

Transhumance

Occupied land was either freehold or crown land. Under the latter there were a variety of categories: annual or five, seven or fourteen year leases, and tickets of occupation or grazing licences.²⁷ Occupancy was determined by the highest bid at public auction or highest tender.²⁸ As details of key statutes have been provided in Chapter 3, discussion here is brief. Many pastoralists held multiple leases, not necessarily adjacent to each other, and often under different regulations. This threatened to make long term planning difficult. The wise, however, used the annual leases as temporary expedients or as trial runs to determine future prospects. As governments lacked means of enforcement, some regulations could be treated with impunity. If financial clauses were not met, then theoretically the lease was forfeited and stock removed. In reality, many awaited the arrival of a new lessee before acting. Leasing tended to increase and freehold to decrease the further westward land was located, this being demonstrated by WJT Clarke's operations.²⁹

No accounts tell of operations around St Clair, but inferences can be drawn from Plateau stockholders. By the late 1830s between Bronte and the Nive stock owners such as Henric Nicholas, John Young, and John and Ebenezer Geiss had summer fattening runs with major holdings elsewhere.³⁰ The operations of Major Thomas Fenton who acquired *Allenvale*, Macquarie Plains, illustrate the play of lowland base and up-country holdings. The 8,000 acre home property contained stone shearing

²⁷For example of an annual grazing licence see *HTG* 1 February 1859; for a 14 year lease see *HTG* 1 July 1862

²⁸In 1895 John King's lease of Lot 389, 1500 acres in Saltfleet was up for public auction, with the highest bidder securing a 14 year lease from 1 April 1887 provided half of the annual rent was paid at auction, *TG*, 11 May 1886

²⁹*HTC* 28 January 1852

³⁰*HTC* 17 May 1839 & *HTG* 30 December 1838; Geiss' were from *Mount Nassau*, Bridgewater; Young's *Hunters Hill* Ouse and New Norfolk

and wool sheds, sheep wash in Derwent, new house, a five acre garden and orchard, 7,000 sheep, the 400 acre *Fontainbleau* and 1,200 acres of crown land. Fenton leased 6,000 acres at Guelph Plains, fenced on 2 sides with rivers bounding the remaining sides. There were sheep yards, huts, a five-foot fenced 500 acre paddock, dipping apparatus, boilers, casks and sufficient rations and tobacco for winter.³¹ This pattern of transhumance was not the entire picture, as was shown by James Clark, District Constable of Marlborough (discussed later in this chapter), and Lieut. Arthur Davies, RN, married to a niece of England's naval hero, Horatio Nelson. Although Davies had low-country lands, notably *The Lawn* near Granton, his Bronte estate was the hub of pastoral operations, as it was for Clarke.³² Similarly in the late 19th and early 20th century, the Pearces from Mt Charles and Clarence River, Orrs from the Dee, and FR Evans from Bronte leased adjacent country. Not all pastoralists acted independently as some relied upon funding from urban speculators such as Captain Charles Swanston at the Derwent Bank.

Owners' intentions included fattening young stock and simply resting lowland pastures. As autumn approached, additional stockmen, often including the owner, proceeded to high-country leases for mustering and then droving stock either to the home property or to sale. Kerr's diary for 1844 until 1846 reveals frequent visits by his brother-in-law William and Henry Dixon to their Marlborough leases. Auctions could occur at any time, depending upon seasonal demand. For instance in the 1840s stock, belonging to WH Dixon, JL Geiss from Bridgewater, James Jamieson of *Glenleith* Plenty and WJT Clarke, from the Bronte district were auctioned at the Woolpack Inn, Macquarie Plains. For sale in October 1847 from Bronte were dairy

³¹HTC 28 January 1852 & for *Fontainbleau* see sale in HTC 21 April 1849

³²For details of *Bronte* under Davies see *Colonial Times* 29 October 1840 & under JM Dixon & JM Thomson of *Emu Bottom*, Hamilton, HTC 19 April 1845

cows, heifers to calve immediately,' cows accustomed to be milked without their calves', and hand-reared heifers.³³ In the early 1850s Cockburn revealed that for the last 10-12 years stronger stock had wintered in the uplands while most flocks departed in April-May.³⁴ This departure assisted the health of the expectant ewes and their new born which usually arrived in August.³⁵ However, depending on the owner's needs, stock could be moved at any stage. Often droving was communal, at least amongst Bronte-Marlborough owners: Orr and Kerr and the WJT Clarke-Dixon-Kerr-Jamieson mobs.³⁶

With most stock coming from the Derwent Valley, the main routes were the Victoria Valley Road and Calder's upgraded track from Marlborough to St Clair and beyond. Expenditure on the Marlborough road and bridging rivers such as the Nive and Pine was to facilitate movement of stock; improve communications with the outlying region and, importantly for potential government revenue, improve the value of Crown land.³⁷ Nevertheless, visitors such as Butler Stoney and Cockburn reported that conditions were not ideal. In the absence of bridges, fords barely sufficed; travelling time increased, as did potential injury to man and beast.³⁸

Most livestock was sold either to augment local herds and flocks or for local and Hobart markets. Midlands pastoralist Charles Headlam recounted how it took five hours for a mob of 3,000 to pass by his property, *Egleston*, on their way from the

³³HTC 6 October 1847

³⁴FJ Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern hemisphere*, Calcutta, 1856, p. 75

³⁵Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 25

³⁶Kerr Diaries, entries for 15 May 1844 and 20 May 1844

³⁷'Board of Works: expenditure reports', *TPP* [H of A] 1866, No 34, p. 9

³⁸'For fords see Mr TB Moore's report upon the Country between Lake St Clair and Macquarie Harbour', *TPP* [H of A] 1883, No. 56, For a gubernatorial account see *Tasmanian Mail* 9 March 1878

WJT Clarke empire to that of the Fields.³⁹ While the larger proportion of meat was consumed almost immediately, a smaller quantity was salted for winter use or for ships. An example of the latter was 200 tierces of winter cured Clarence River beef for whalers' stores.⁴⁰

James Clark's life was a classic colonial tale of rags to riches or more apposite, from poor policeman to pastoral prince. German-born, Clark lived most of his life in England before migrating to Van Diemen's Land. As constable at Marlborough from 1838, Clark's major duty was the prevention of stock theft. This still left sufficient time to deal in skins, initially kangaroo, then sheep and cattle, and to acquire property. Such was his financial sagacity that, although his commencement salary was £10 per annum and a horse, within sixteen years his estimated fortune of £60,000 included 2,736 acres freehold and at least 5,500 westward, including Mt Charles and a hut at Lake Dixon, previously his namesake's.⁴¹ Clark sought further wealth by supplying Victorian goldfields, but lost heavily when his flocks were shorn wet and the wool overheated on the voyage to England. Like several other pastoral princes, Clark returned to England.⁴²

As WJT Clarke's capacity to acquire land and wealth in the Australian colonies from the early 1830s.⁴³ has been narrated elsewhere, only pertinent aspects of his life are

³⁹C. Dean, *Cattle King of Van Diemen's Land William Field (1774-1837)*, Margate, 1998, p. 118

⁴⁰*Mercury* 27 January 1860

⁴¹WA Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold in the Neighbourhood of Frenchman's Cap', *HTG* 17 May 1859

⁴²*HTC* 16 April 1849 KR von Stieglitz, *A history of Hamilton, Ouse and Gretna*, Launceston, 1963, p. 45 for mainland career

⁴³For background see H Anderson, 'William John Turner Clarke', *ADB* Vol 1, pp. 228-9 & Michael Clarke, *Big Clarke*, Carlton, 1980

here outlined. The experience and knowledge of livestock, droving and dealing acquired in England stood the West Countryman in good stead for his colonial career. To Nature's endowments, an imposing stature and physical strength, were added the ability to work with labourers, and the mental shrewdness to bargain with and often bluff government officials and landowners. Unlike his policeman namesake, 'Big' Clarke's mainland operations dramatically increased his wealth. His interest in the St Clair area began when he purchased *Norton Mandeville* from WM Orr in 1846. Seeing that competition for New Country land was intense, Clarke pioneered the grazing of remote westward land. Thus huge areas were acquired cheaply for his summer grazing operations dominated by Leicester sheep. By 1860 the Clarke holdings, including those of sons Thomas Biggs of *Quorn Hall* Campbell Town, Joseph and William John of *Norton Mandeville*, within the parishes of Caxton and Saltfleet, amounted to 25,680 and 3,640 acres respectively.⁴⁴ Three years later Morton Allport commented that the station at Lake Dixon was deserted, although Mt Charles and Middle Run stations, east and west of the Derwent, still operated.⁴⁵ In 1881 prospector WR Bell observed that Clarke's grazing had long ceased⁴⁶ asserting that fluke and hyena (ie, thylacine) made 'it [ie depasturing] anything but a profitable speculation' on the Lake Dixon and western King William runs so Big Clarke's flocks were removed.⁴⁷ While fluke was always a potential problem in marshy conditions, the thylacine was a scapegoat for inadequate care by shepherds, a decline in pastoral prosperity during depression and a general demonising of the animal by colonial society. Paddle in *The Last*

⁴⁴HTG 25 December 1860 & HTG 9 June 1863

⁴⁵Morton Allport, 'An account of our late trip to Lake St Clair', to Curzon Allport, March 1863, Excursion to Lake St Clair, MS Box 11, Folder 7, Allport Library & Tully in 1859 used Mt Charles and Lake Dixon huts, and his stock ran on the King William Plain, HTG 17 May 1859

⁴⁶*Examiner* 29 April 1881

⁴⁷*Examiner* 29 April 1881. Hyena was often used instead of thylacine

Tasmanian Tiger argues that, while an occasional thylacine killed at most a few sheep, there is no evidence that the animal ravaged flocks.⁴⁸ After realising that Van Demonian meat-production costs were 9d per lb dearer (15d compared with 6d) than at Port Phillip, Clarke concentrated on the latter. However, he retained his former island holdings until his death in 1874 when his Derwent Valley properties were left to youngest son Joseph.⁴⁹

Some owners, such as WM Orr and the Reads of *Redlands*⁵⁰ oversaw their highland runs while others relied on managers. The further west the holdings, the more infrequent were managerial visits, with the possible exception of the indefatigable JM Dixon, WJT Clarke's manager at *Norton Mandeville*. The degree of responsibility borne by resident shepherds is a matter of surmise which could only be resolved by oral records or farm diaries, if they ever existed. For small landholders such as the Pearce's who lived locally, management was easier and facilitated immediate response to weather fluctuations.

Initially, stock was driven to the highland runs in late spring/early summer according to variables as type of season and condition of owner's home run. In 1868 HP Sorell stated that most stock only remained from October to April with only a few of the strongest wethers remaining year round on the bigger runs.⁵¹ Exposure to inclement weather and the possibility of snow at any time reduced condition. By a quirk of weather, regular grazing occurred after the great frost of 1837 destroyed

⁴⁸R Paddle, *The last Tasmanian Tiger: the History and Extinction of the Thylacine*, Melbourne, 2000, pp. 98-167 passim

⁴⁹'Annual report of Department of Lands & Surveys', *TPP* 1898, No. 56, p. 22 for auction of the Clarke estate

⁵⁰For family details of the Reads, see HCC Langdon, 'George Frederick Read', *ADB* Vol 2, pp. 365-6

⁵¹'Survey Districts - Crown Lands', *TPP* 1868, No. 30, p. 13

literally tens of thousands of trees across the Plateau, and visitors for a half century witnessed the devastation from around Marlborough to beyond St Clair. Most probably, earlier occupation would have deterred all but the most hopeful and made St Clair a *terra incognita* for a longer period. Conditions in August 1900 illustrate the potential effects on livestock. With snow cover between 2'6" and 6", workers at Derwent Bridge suffered frost bite and some had blood issuing from pores of hands and face.⁵² In such conditions, stock losses would probably have been enormous. The majority of sheep were driven down-country for shearing in late November-early December. There were several associated cost-savings: neither shearing sheds nor wages for shearers, estimated by Hull at between seventeen and twenty shillings a hundred,⁵³ and saving on carting extra supplies for shearers and transporting wool the extra distance to market.

In daily routines it was vital that shepherds knew the probable whereabouts of stock. Some intuitively, others through experience, would have shared Calder's observation that sheep frequented warm stony rises, 'Forest Banks' as he called them, in preference to grazing on more abundant herbage on the open country.⁵⁴ Knowledge of behaviour in rough weather and diurnal and annual cycles were also important. Understanding of horses and ability to ride, especially at mustering, and handling dogs, were other vital attributes. Possession of horses depended on variables such as area of holdings and number of livestock, and personal wealth of employees. Although livestock numbers are rarely given, approximations can be

⁵²ZDH 28 August 1900

⁵³Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 53

⁵⁴J Calder, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and the Frenchman's Cap', *HTC* 21 September 1837

made using the 1868 estimated carrying capacities of 2 sheep per 3 acres and one per three acres respectively by District Surveyors Smith and Sorell.⁵⁵

Calder and others frequently lamented that shepherds devoted too much time to hunting to the detriment of their flocks. Calder attributed more stock losses to the 'criminal carelessness' of shepherds than to any other cause. He avowed that

four-fifths of every day is passed by them either by the fire-side or in wandering about from one hut to another, or in doing anything rather than minding their own proper business, while their flocks are straying, they neither know nor care very much, where.⁵⁶

However, given that in the mid-1850s, Hull estimated that each shepherd statewide tended 2,000 animals, some loss had to be expected.⁵⁷ That trinity of natural disasters — fire, flood and snow — caused other losses. Another significant problem was stock theft, human frailty combining with opportunity and remoteness to provide continuous temptation. In collaboration with fellow members of the brotherhood of crime, thieves would drive stolen animals across the Plateau and sell them almost without trace in the northern districts. Hull, noting that shepherds frequently took a trans-Plateau short cut from the Mersey to Hobart, saw this as offering opportunity to lawless escapees. He remarked on the 'freemasonry that exists between them and the shepherds, many of whom were old government men'.⁵⁸

⁵⁵'Survey Districts - Crown Lands', 1868, pp. 9 & 12, HM Hull, *Practical hints to emigrants intending to proceed to Tasmania, and a full description of the several counties and their products*, Hobart Town, 1871, p. 24 thought it was 1 to 3-4 acres

⁵⁶'Lands of Tasmania', *TPP* 1862 [H of A], No. 46, p. v. Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 24 corroborated this claiming they had ample time for hunting

⁵⁷Hull, *Forty years in Tasmania*, p. 24

⁵⁸For Calder see Chapter 3 & for Lascelles Chapter 1 Calder and Constable Lascelles observed possible signs of stolen stock near and west of the Walls of Jerusalem. Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, pp. 52-3. George Bott thought the Ellis Brothers of Bothwell suffered big cattle losses on Pelion Plains in 1919 when the Carnes were shepherds. G Bott personal comment; From

When opportunity arose, the country was burnt. Although current views vary, the practice was then a shibboleth of land management. Illustrating this was Hamilton pastoralist WH Wells' sale advertisement which stressed that his runs at the Clarence were burnt two years earlier.⁵⁹ Near the Clarence, Cockburn thought 'bushfires and long occupation by stock have greatly improved' the marshes.⁶⁰ Here and in the Monaro, burning off was said to dry the country, and remove unpalatable woody herbage to enable fresh green pick to appear the following spring. The role of different climatic conditions was rarely acknowledged.⁶¹ These arguments in favour of burning-off were reiterated throughout the 19th and persisted into the 20th century. Government prohibition of burning unoccupied Crown Lands was honoured more in the breach with inadequate enforcement and inability or lack of care in preventing fire.⁶²

Other routines involved cutting and carting firewood, and routine maintenance to huts and fences. That big log fires were essential even in mid summer was supported by Hull's claim that a Bronte shepherd froze to death in February.⁶³ Cockburn pondered how shepherds could be persuaded to live and work in a 'rough, rugged, cold and wet' area where human contact was infrequent because huts were usually 10-12 miles apart. Oxford don, Geoffrey Smith thought the shepherds

valuation rolls Ellis' had land at Gad's Hill from 1917 until at least 1925; the 1919 roll lists James Carnes as a resident of Gad's Hill

⁵⁹HTC 28 January 1852

⁶⁰Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 48; Similarly, WA Tully attributed the increased quantity of good feed and drier marshes in the vicinity of the Gordon River to fire, Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold', p. 744

⁶¹WK Hancock, *Discovering Monaro: a study of man's impact on the environment* London, 1972, pp. 145-6

⁶²See 18th Vict No. 10, Bush Fires Act 1854 which dealt with lighting fires from December until the end of March. For the regulation of 21 February 1896 forbidding the practice unless with permission see TGG 30 June 1896 p 1121

⁶³Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 52

'rather primitive sort of people; [and] very few of them can read or write ...'⁶⁴ Work was not onerous, only a few hours a day, which gave ample opportunity for hunting and sitting in front of fires smoking pipes. Shepherds received an annual salary of £30-50 and provisions, with tea, sugar, flour and an ample supply of fresh mutton or beef the staples.⁶⁵ To break the monotony, they occasionally visited Bothwell, Ouse, Hamilton or even Hobart for a bender, and would return when funds were exhausted. In short, their lives were similar to many Australian rural workers, save for their engagement with snow. Cockburn's assessment that their existence was 'not much better than the sheep they tend' is debatable.⁶⁶

Shepherds' hospitality, 'the custom of the bush', was renowned, partly for want of news and partly because costs of provisions were borne by their masters.⁶⁷ At Clarke's hut at the Clarence, Cockburn's meal consisted of mutton chops, damper and tea, and, if the latter was in short supply, sassafras leaves were added. Vacant huts were open and visitors were expected to use them.⁶⁸ Surveyor Tully used Clarke's huts at Mt Charles and Lake Dixon in 1859 in his auriferous reconnaissance of the Frenchman's Cap area as did EA Counsel in 1878.⁶⁹ Butler Stoney corroborated the men's generosity and hospitality; they were always glad to hear and see a stranger. In emergencies shepherds were of great assistance.⁷⁰ John King's man at the Clarence, David Temple, who provided horses to transport

⁶⁴GW Smith, *Geoffrey Watkins Smith*, Oxford, 1917, p. 143

⁶⁵Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, pp. 24-5

⁶⁶Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 77

⁶⁷WK Hancock, *Discovering Monaro*, pp. 34-6 describes them as good men but not necessarily good companions but Lhotsky, p. 82 praised their hospitality

⁶⁸Cockburn, *Letters from the Southern Hemisphere*, p. 77

⁶⁹Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold', & Counsel, NS 262/211 February 1878

⁷⁰H Butler Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, London, 1856, (facs edit) Hobart, 1982, pp. 214-9 passim

one of Edward Counsel's workers with badly cut leg illustrates the point.⁷¹ Similarly, in the Arrowsmith fatality of August 1900 when snow reached telegraph wires in places, Temple assisted.⁷² Their comprehensive local knowledge was much appreciated by visitors and/or surveyors. For example in 1887 King's shepherd, possibly Temple, guided Legge and Piguénit up King William I.⁷³

The shepherds' lack of human contact, distance from the settled districts, absence of formal education compounded eccentricity. Probably their customs were a combination of conservatism, 'we've always done it this way', and innovation with no fixed methods to be copied. With his eye for the unusual, Calder lamented that shepherds, the only inhabitants of these districts, 'will never style these things aright', and persisted in calling Hugel 'Fugel' and 'have perverted' Olympus into Lumpus.⁷⁴ Their nomenclature of local topographic features was mundane: Mt Arrowsmith was called the Sisters because of two beehive piles of quartz rocks.⁷⁵

Lake Ayr

Amongst some older snarers there was a belief that escaped cattle from Field's mob were the progenitors of wild cattle on Pelion Plains.⁷⁶ With Field's running stock on the Borradaile and February Plains to the north and Howell's Plains⁷⁷ to the east, it was likely that some wilder beasts would evade annual musters and wander into

⁷¹*Tasmanian Mail* 18 May 1878

⁷²*ZDH* 28 August 1900

⁷³WV Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', *PPRST* 1887, pp. 114-127 at p. 117

⁷⁴J Calder, 'Some Account of the Country between Hamilton and the Frenchman's Cap',

⁷⁵Tully, 'Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold',

⁷⁶Bill Steers personal comment 18 January 1980

⁷⁷Howells leased & then acquired 1860 & 1877. Dean, *Cattle King of Van Diemen's Land*, pp. 123 & 143 states that Thomas William Field purchased Howell's Plains and Gad's Hill in 1869 and 1877 respectively

the bush. Stewart's observations of numerous wild cattle on the Upper Paddocks while surveying a route to the west in 1891 support this conclusion.⁷⁸ Six years later Innes was impressed with the area, describing it as 'rich bottom land covered with a rank growth of white grass, which our jaded pack-horses seemed to greatly enjoy.'⁷⁹ Given that Field's stockmen most probably knew of the plains, it is interesting to ponder why land was not selected earlier. Perhaps its remoteness was too difficult a problem to overcome: perhaps the clue lay in Stewart's observation that the cattle were lean in winter but fat in summer;⁸⁰ perhaps there was simply a desire to keep the location as a back-up in hard times, thus precluding the possibility of others utilising the land.

The Staverton-Kentishbury-Lorinna area was taken up about 1903-04 but life remained in the pioneering stage for several years because of difficult access and lack of good land.⁸¹ In February 1910 George Sloane, prospector, snarer and farmer at Lorinna and Staverton, commenced leasing 4,000 acres for £10 per annum around Lake Ayr.⁸² The catalyst was the caterpillar-wrought devastation to local paddocks.⁸³ Mostly cattle were grazed, although Lorinna snarer George Bott thought that sheep were introduced in 1919.⁸⁴ It is unclear whether Sloane ran his

⁷⁸'Mole Creek to Mount Zeehan Railway Survey, Report of the Surveyor in Charge Mr Allan Stewart', *TPP*, 1891, No. 140, p. 4 for the Upper Paddocks & p. 5 for button grass country around Lake Ayr

⁷⁹'Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes upon the Track from Mole Creek to Rosebery, Mount Reid', *TPP*, 1897, No. 43, pp. 9 & 10; similar views were repeated by McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, 1919, p. 5

⁸⁰'Mole Creek to Mount Zeehan Railway Survey, Report of the Surveyor in Charge Mr Allan Stewart', p. 5. George Lee had taken up 28 acres in 1888 but failed to meet requirements. In 1892 he acquired and kept larger holdings at The Paddocks. S Cubit, *Snarers and Cattlemen of the high country: the Lees of Lees Paddocks*, Launceston, 1987, pp. 9 & 18

⁸¹'Annual report of the Lands and Surveys Department for 1903-04', *TPP*, 1904, No. 26, p. 15

⁸²*TGG* 21 February 1911, the lease was in Horncastle Parish, County of Lincoln, Municipality of Deloraine

⁸³*Examiner* 8 February 1910

⁸⁴G Bott personal comment 11 October 1980

Figure 28: Remains of the Pelion Stockyards



own stock or in conjunction with Charles Day and JF Cox who took over the lease in October 1923.⁸⁵

As with high country grazing around the state, this Crown Land lease was used by Lorinna/Staverton/Sheffield area farmers to rest home pastures. Sloane lobbied for assistance to cut a track to Lake Ayr which also would benefit prospectors heading towards the 'Cannon River Valley'. Furthermore, he declared his willingness to assist with costs.⁸⁶ Lack of success meant that he continued to use Innes' high level track, described by Government Geologist WH Twelvetrees as 'a cold one for travelling stock', across the February Plains.⁸⁷ From 1916, as outlined in Chapter 5, the preferred option was Pelion Road from Lorinna and the Wolfram Mine track to Pelion Plains because it was shorter and more sheltered than Innes', and gave access to fertile river flats. For non-Lorinna farmers, Innes' February Plains track remained useful.

Grazing levels are hard to determine, with Government Geologist Mackintosh Reid opining in 1919 that the 'full value of ... [grazing has] not yet been realised'.⁸⁸ Accounts from the 1930s provide details. Prior to stock being driven-up, stockmen, usually four or five, followed the usual custom of burning-off native grasses in November to encourage new growth for the January arrivals. Aubrey Hall, who worked on John Cox's Lorinna farm for six years, recalled sowing seed mixed with

⁸⁵TGG 3 April 1922. The annual rental was £20

⁸⁶PWD 24/3 Kentish Municipality files: Sloane's bridge to Lake Ayr, 1911 and Track to Lake Ayr, 1915

⁸⁷WH Twelvetrees, *The Middlesex and Mount Claude Mining Field*, Geological Survey Bulletin No 14 Dept of Mines, Hobart, 1913, p. 2

⁸⁸*Examiner* 30 October 1919

oatmeal in the bare or inter-tussock spaces.⁸⁹ Mobs, usually steers, ranged from 80 to 132 for Sloane, Charles Day and JF Cox, 99 for Andy Wyllie and 75 on the Hall/Duff trip. Colin Duff described how 300 sheep from Lower Barrington and 75 steers were driven in 1932 to a rendezvous at Gisborne's farm. Duff stressed the value of 'a dog that knew his job' with sheep dispersed a couple of miles. Wyllie recollected that, with an early start, the stock would usually stop at Gisborne's on the first night before reaching Staverton by the end of the second day. To ensure meeting the schedule, the aim was to arrive at the Round Hill Mine at change of shift. Wyllie also noted that bulls would take about a week to readjust after arriving at the home farm.⁹⁰

Drovers stayed in the two huts at Old Pelion, about a mile westward across the plain from the stockyards, for about a week with the Boss remaining an additional fortnight. The yards were located about half a mile from the Douglas and fences, which extended to Lake Ayr, were a mixture of morticed timber and deadwood.⁹¹ Unlike the Plateau, there was rarely any checking of stock until the autumn mustering. Wyllie recalled receiving 10/- per day to help with the cattle, but had to supply a horse and two dogs.⁹² He said that when cattle were first taken back, feed was sparse as kangaroos ate the best *Poa* grasses, but after a period of snaring the cattle fattened. In heavy snows cattle sometimes browsed on myrtle leaves. Some stock evaded mustering between April and June because of possible flooding in the Douglas Creek or when snow covered the Plains.

⁸⁹M Haberle, *Mountain reflections*, Don, 1993, p. 86

⁹⁰A Wyllie personal comment October 1981

⁹¹Roy Davies 11 October 1980 & Wyllie, personal comment; Mole Creek to Mount Zeehan Railway Survey, Report of the Surveyor in Charge Mr Allan Stewart', p. 4 noted that huts had been built at Arm River, Wurragarra & Pelion in 1891

⁹²Also on this trip were his dad Dan and Arthur, possibly Arthur Wilson.

Cradle Valley

In winter 1830 VDL Company shepherds told Alexander McKay, accompanying GA Robinson, that around the Iris River on the Middlesex Plains would make an 'excellent cattle run'.⁹³ A less sanguine Robinson, doubted whether sheep could cope with severe frost, snow and rain. As in the south there were differing perceptions of the landscape. Some such as Butler Stoney thought the coarse grass on and to the south of Middlesex was unsuitable for cattle.⁹⁴ Again the practical men's judgment was vindicated, with the VDL Company and then Field's running stock here for over a century. The history of this area is replete with details of dare-devil riders who collectively 'had the reputation of being the best, the most fearless and dashing horsemen in Tasmania'.⁹⁵ These eccentric stockmen, whose cattle drives became part of contemporary folk lore, are not pertinent to this narrative. Nevertheless, cattle drives helped maintain outside interest in the area and official visitors, hunter-snarers, prospectors, surveyors and later walkers used stockhuts.⁹⁶ Wild cattle, a mixture of horned Kylow from Scotland and any unbranded Durhams and Leicesters that the stockman could claim, may have been the discoverers of other high country grazing areas.⁹⁷

It is almost certain that shepherds such as John George Francis, 'Jack the Shepherd', based at Middlesex for fifty three years, and Dave Courtney⁹⁸ knew of the grazing

⁹³NJB Plomley, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834*, Hobart, 1966, pp. 201 & 202, 19 & 20 August 1830 & for cattle on Middlesex p. 889 27 June 1834

⁹⁴Butler Stoney, *A residence in Tasmania*, pp. 288-90

⁹⁵Calder's description of an 1865 trip in LA Meredith (ed) *Walch's Tasmanian Guidebook, 1871*, Hobart, 1871, p. 212. Individuals include Sutherland, William Roden and Dave Courtney

⁹⁶For an official visit of Governor Weld see *Tasmanian Mail* 2 February 1878

⁹⁷Dean, *Cattle King of Van Diemen's Land*, p. 35

⁹⁸For obituary for Francis see *Examiner* 7 March 1912

potential of Cradle Valley. As with Pelion Plains, the real impetus for transhumance was the increased accessibility flowing from links with the west and the determination by governments to make available backblocks or 3rd class land to genuine settlers. RE Smith was a beneficiary of these policies and incentives offered to ex-servicemen in his search for land in 1918. Although taking-up land in Cradle Valley, he sought country in the Upper Mersey, but hopes were squashed when locals indicated unavailability of crown land.⁹⁹ Smith's attention switched to the Iris Creek area of Middlesex Plains, where previously George Williams of Wilmot had run stock, only to be again thwarted.¹⁰⁰ Thus his pastoral vision was confined to Cradle country.

Ulverstone's George Stubbs, Cox and Day, who were already running stock in Pelion country, and Wilmot's Lionel Connel, approached Weindorfer and Smith to rent grassland in Cradle Valley. George Day was successful running 200 sheep at 1d/head per week and 40 cattle without any agreement on price.¹⁰¹ Soon, according to Weindorfer, there was ovine-bovine harmony in the valley.¹⁰² With further arrivals there were nearly a hundred cattle and 400 sheep, numbers which surprised and pleased Smith.¹⁰³ Day declined paying Smith's price for cattle as the last mob were not, contrary to instructions, placed on Connell's lease adjoining Smith's block. The result was that they remained in Cradle Valley 'which was much overstocked, & did not come away as in good conditioned as they otherwise may have done'. His

⁹⁹This latter point about land at Dublin Plains was disputed by Wilks in J Wilks to R Smith, 8 June 1918, 1/7/18 V Walters to R Smith 1 July 1918 & 29/7/18. J Wilks to R Smith 29 July 1918, in NS 234/19/1 AOT

¹⁰⁰R Smith to J Wilks, 11 July 1918 NS 234/19/1

¹⁰¹G Weindorfer to R Smith 22 December 1919 NS 234/19/1

¹⁰²G Weindorfer to R Smith 11 March 1920 NS 234/19/1

¹⁰³G Weindorfer to R Smith 21 March 1920 for arrival of stock & R Smith to G Weindorfer 7 April 1920 for Smith's reaction NS 234/19/1

offer, £20, was accepted by Smith. On nearby Hounslow Heath, the Fields' ran 3,000 sheep.¹⁰⁴

Also important was the spread of cattle beyond Cradle Valley. Soon cattle, mostly Day's, some Copping and Wilson's, (called 'President' Wilson because he was an American) spread beyond the Valley to the plains around Windemere.¹⁰⁵ Most probably the cattle wandered along Jack Brown's track or Barn Bluff Road, cut before 1894, around Cradle's western flanks.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps this success inspired Smith to expand his vision splendid as he inquired about Field's 10,000 acre lease on Middlesex and leased additional land on the Dove at a higher than anticipated price to prevent Cooper from Somerset gaining a foothold in the Valley.¹⁰⁷ His nominal reason was the need to rest and water stock because his home farm, *Westwood*, at Forth was fifty miles distant.¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

Nearly a century of livestock grazing in the Cuvier Valley, together with perennial burning of the countryside by shepherds, has affected the natural vegetation. Marsupials tread more lightly, because they have no hooves, and browse more gently than livestock. Absence of records precludes discussion on overstocking. The precise impact is hard to gauge as botanical studies seem to proceed on the dubious supposition of an unchanging natural environment. Further north grazing from

¹⁰⁴G Weindorfer to R Smith 12 March 1920 NS 234/19/1

¹⁰⁵Possibly Wally Wilson and/or his son Alex residents at Lorinna R Smith to G Weindorfer 20 March 1920 NS 234/19/1 & possibly substantiated by R Smith to L Connell, 28 March 1936 NS 234/19/4

¹⁰⁶*Tasmanian Mail* 16 January 1897

¹⁰⁷R Smith to Secretary for Lands 20 May 1920 & R Smith to G Weindorfer 14 April 1920 NS 234/19/1

¹⁰⁸R Smith to Lands Department 29 June 1921 NS 234/19/1

Cradle Valley to Windemere and around Pelion Plains, while of shorter duration, was at a higher altitude. Thus the impact on slower growing species could have been more significant. At some stages fires most probably entered peat with dramatic consequences: restoration of ecosystems is almost impossible as slow release of water into streams is damaged and winds and frosts exacerbate erosion. Terrestrial habitat disturbance was probably much more significant than that on riverine and lacustrine environments. The impact of livestock wastes is another area of speculation. Cutting of eucalypts for fencing and stockyards at Pelion is an example of local landscape modification. Other examples include grazing of horses and temporary introduction of dogs. Attempts to introduce artificial grasses must also be considered before a full environmental impact is understood. Information about pasture and stock improvements such as selective breeding, prevalence of stock diseases like scab and ovine catarrh, and the impact of depressions of the 1840s and 1890s on stocking rates would assist a full assessment.

Only in the south had the pastoral princes dominated the history of grazing in The Reserve. In the north and central Reserve and the south from the late 19th century, small holders used the leases because it enabled them to run larger mobs than relying on home farms. Economics favoured this group because of geographic proximity, which precluded the need for permanent shepherds, and relative cheapness of and lack of competition for government land. From its inception there was always a home property and highland run, either lease of freehold. There was no instance of an operation being confined to a single high country property or run.

The problematic nature of the intersection of the world of stockmen and government officials and travellers is exemplified by discussion of the St Clair country amongst

the interlocking world of pastoral princes, businessmen and politicians. The case of JFF Kerr indicates social networks. Kerr's wife, Dorothea, was daughter of Captain Henry Dixon of *Kenmere*, Ouse. JM Dixon, manager for WJT Clarke, was a cousin while friends included the Fentons, Marzettis, Sharlands and Jamiesons. Considerable mixing occurred at such occasions as christenings, marriages and funerals, and social and business functions. Thus St Clair would probably have cropped-up in conversation.

In its early years the SPB saw no contradiction between reserve status and continued exploitation of natural resources, thus indicating that the existing position in May 1922 would continue. In the short term this was the case as Clive Lord's party the following year sighted cattle in Cuvier Valley.¹⁰⁹ But, as always in history notions of permanence often proved illusory. Within a decade, high-country transhumance was threatened by the unexpected: the promulgation of a wildlife sanctuary.

¹⁰⁹C Lord, 'Westward Ho — A Trip to Lake St Clair', December 1923, unpub manuscript, University of Tasmania archives

CHAPTER 7

HUNTING AND SNARING

Snaring properly, however, requires no little skill and care, and an immense deal of attention.

HL Wheelwright commenting on snaring in the Western Districts, Victoria¹

having been caught in the mountainous country which is covered with snow for the greater part of the year, the [opossum] furs are very dense and ... are considered to be the finest in the world.

Weekly Courier 30 August 1923 speaking of furs from the Lake Ayr country

Hunting of native fauna for pelts and for food is co-terminous with human occupation of Tasmania. Early explorers, maritime and terrestrial, noted Aboriginal use of furs for rudimentary clothing. Almost certainly the tribes, especially those with high country territory, would have observed and taken advantage of the thicker furs of mammals in these areas, especially during periods of prolonged cold. More frequently, however, game was hunted for meat.

A similar situation prevailed after European arrival in Van Diemen's Land until the late 1820s-early 1830s. The colony's hunting parson, the Rev Robert Knopwood asserted that 'had it not been for the good success in killing kangaroos, the colony would have been destitute in everything.'² Having achieved the short term survival of the colony, many hunters, normally accompanied by dogs, remained at large in the bush.³ Bushrangers such as Michael Howe and Bass Strait sealers used furs for clothing.⁴ Then in the 1820s the tanning of skins for leather increased hunting

¹HL Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings of a naturalist*, London, 1861, p. 21

²M Nichols, *The diary of the Rev Robert Knopwood, 1803-1838*, Hobart, 1977, p. 94, 23 October 1905

³J Boyce, 'A Dog's Breakfast ... Lunch and Dinner: Canine Dependency in early Van Diemen's Land', *PPTHRA* Vol 51(4) December 2004, pp. 194-213, perhaps overstates the case both for hunting grounds in the Midlands where not all were fenced, and Aboriginal dependence especially when on the move. For example in the West Aboriginal relied much more heavily on shellfish than game. As well he understates the vast grassy plains in Port Phillip which were so attractive to pastoralists from the 1830s.

⁴T Jetson, 'Hunting and Snaring: from furs to fashions', *PPTHRA* Vol. 45 (2), June 1998, pp. 117-21

pressures. As outlined earlier, hunters roamed the Central Plateau, perhaps extending their operations to the fringes of The Reserve in search of game.

The chapter uses early travellers' accounts and guide books to descriptions of hunting in nineteenth century England. In addition the landscape is examined for evidence of hunting. Similarities and differences between Tasmanian and their North American counterparts are illustrated, and phases of hunting are delineated by melding attitudes towards hunters, statutes regulating their operations and specific developments within The Reserve. Two newspaper accounts, unusual for being published and rich in detail, are included to illuminate these phases. The various phases of operations from techniques of hunting to territories and lifestyle are subsumed under the general concept of the 'Book of Snaring' whose final chapters deal with man's relations with man, ie sales and markets, rather than the man-nature interrelationship. Biographical details are given of the two dominant hunters, Paddy Hartnett and Bert Nichols, with briefer details on other figures. Impacts on the environment are discussed before conclusions are drawn.

One of the earliest pertinent insights into hunting dates from the early 1830s. Dr John Henderson, convalescing after a stint in Bengal, commented on flora and fauna, and described physical characteristics of many species. Thus 'oppossums' were mainly nocturnal, possessed a peculiar shrill cry and were easily pointed by dogs because of their 'strong smell'. So disagreeable was the possum's flavour that even the lowest orders of Europeans would not eat them unless circumstances were exceptional.⁵ Henderson also noted that shepherds tried to snare the Van Diemen's Land hyena.⁶

⁵J Henderson, *Colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, Calcutta, 1832, p. 140

⁶Henderson, *Colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land*, p. 141

Canadian patriot William Gates, deported to the colony in 1840, provides probably the first description of snaring. While based at the Jerusalem probation station, Gates described that along pads or paths

A stake is driven into the ground close beside the path, over which a wire, attached at one end to a clog, is passed, ending in a slipping-noose, projecting just far enough and at such a height as will receive the head of the simple minded and unsuspecting kangaroo, as it passes to or from its drink in the night. The motion of the animal is enough to tighten the noose, and whether it go forward or backward, it is soon strangled.⁷

To the 'half-starved' men, this addition to rations was a bonus. Thus it is probable that British trapping and snaring techniques had been adapted to local conditions for some years. Richard Jefferies' evocative account of youthful poaching activities in Southern England, *The Amateur Poacher*, 1879, provides such a link. Amongst the many techniques of catching rabbits and pheasants, he describes some relevant to Van Demonian snaring. He claimed that old fashioned poachers favoured the effective wire with a springe or bow to catch hares. They thrust a stout stick or young sapling into the ground before bending it into an arch. When the wire was thrown, a springe was instantly released and drew fast around the neck of the hare. This method was abandoned because of its conspicuousness.⁸ Jefferies spoke too of the snare consisting of a short stick, stuck in the ground, with a notch at the projecting end to hold a string attached to the end of the wire away from the run. The snare, consisting of two or three wires twisted together, was held upright over the run by a smaller stick. Success depended whether the lesser loop or slip knot in the snare could run quickly and grip tightly.⁹ These methods, adapted to local conditions, formed the basis of Tasmanian snaring and trapping.

⁷W Gates, *Recollections of Life in Van Diemen's Land*, (ed) G Mackaness Dubbo, New South Wales, 1961, p. 9

⁸R Jefferies, *The Amateur Poacher*, London, 1879, p. 258

⁹Jefferies, *The Amateur Poacher*, pp. 4-45

The reminiscences of GT Lloyd reflect keen observation and a curiosity about the natural world. English comparisons are salient with the echidna being a 'meagre specimen of a hedgehog.' Lloyd noted that thousands of kangaroos were hunted for their skins which were either tanned or exported to England. If his admiration for the 'Wallabee kangaroo' for 'its remarkable beauty and symmetry'¹⁰ was unusual, his comments on plucking feathers from live black swans were at odds with contemporary attitudes.¹¹

Historiography becomes more complicated in proceeding from the generalised state scene to the particular landscape. With participants illiterate or semi-literate, with little or no desire to record their daily routines for fear of revealing details of illegal activities, written records are scant.¹² Yet clues exist: studying the landscape reveals stumps of trees cut for firewood or building huts, axe marks and 'blazes' on trees, logs hollowed for tanning skins, fireplaces and huts in varying stages of deterioration. Debris including cooking utensils, carbide lamps, remains of snares or traps, leather soles and rusting tins adds richness to the historical archive. Also rare are 'plants' usually consisting of split boards used as a shelf in the hollowed base of a large tree, a hollow tree used for tanning or hiding skins or as a trough for dogs, and an occasional tree felled to obtain honey. Oral evidence provides information about individuals, huts, methods, unusual weather and attitudes of contemporary society. There are limitations, especially the ever declining number of interviewees and the skills of the interviewer.

¹⁰G Lloyd, *Thirty Three Years in Tasmania and Victoria*, London, 1862, p. 69

¹¹Lloyd, *Thirty-three years in Tasmania and Victoria*, p. 85. In a rare example of advocacy for animal rights, Lloyd suggested that it would be more natural for human hair for wigs to be 'plucked out by the roots from the head of a living subject'.

¹²RE Smith, 'The Dark Age of Cradle Mountain', encapsulated this idea, asserting they were 'the most silent of people about where they go and what they do.'

Backgrounds

Venturing into The Reserve before the season commenced, the 'princes of the profession' normally stayed between two and three months, depending on the season's length. Usually they were rural labourers who migrated from the smaller hamlets and villages for the winter, or shepherds and stockmen who remained in the high country after livestock returned down country. The former were mainly manual or semi-skilled workers employed on farms, road and in forests from country towns westwards from Deloraine to Mole Creek area, the Sheffield-Wilmot district, and in the south in small hamlets from the Hamilton-Ouse-Bothwell area to Derwent Bridge. Occasionally some men came from the West as illustrated by a *Weekly Courier* article and observations by surveyor Wilks.¹³ Most snared for several years, usually but not always, in the same general area of The Reserve. A smaller group included those who lasted a season or two but for varied reasons did not persist. Hunting offered ordinary labourers an opportunity, albeit not every season, to improve their financial position. For some the money was sufficient to purchase a small farm, while for others it meant a car. Initial cash outlays were small: food mainly flour, tea, sugar, bacon, some vegetables and tinned products, while equipment such as a snarer's axe, carbide lamp and acetylene were relatively cheap. In some ways — such as using small outlays of capital and huge amounts of time, and requiring ability to read the landscape — snaring resembled the first or prospecting phase of mining. While prospecting offered greater potential riches, snaring usually provided a more secure, if variable, income. Snaring was more highly regulated and most practitioners were local in comparison to the often cosmopolitan background of prospectors.

Comparisons with the hunters of North America are illuminating at many points. Although techniques differ because of the species hunted, particularly the beaver,

¹³*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

similar talents were required. Competition between European hunters and indigenous peoples over resources and territory lasted less than three decades in Tasmania, whereas in United States it was longer and more bitter. In the United States hunting began earlier, and was in decline by the early 1840s as silk replaced beaver in the manufacture of hats. Techniques in doffing hats rather than the hats' constituent materials now determined social class. Hunting in The Reserve probably began in the late 1830s-early 1840s. Unlike Tasmania where hunters were predominantly free agents, in the States many were employed by large companies such as Pacific Fur Company. Auctions at Sheffield and Mole Creek were similar to, yet different from, the American rendezvous, which also involved the trading of general commodities. In both cases alcohol played a prominent part in celebrations. In Tasmania the Gads Hill huts, and later those at Boggy Marsh, which were used as depots for supplies and dried skins and an occasional meeting place, played a similar role.¹⁴ In Tasmania most hunters operated alone or in small groups of two or three whereas in America parties were usually larger. In contrast to the relative homogeneous background of Tasmanian hunters, American hunters included Frenchmen and Scandinavians. Diversity was normal as exemplified by William H Ashley, later Governor of Missouri; famed guide, mountaineer, trapper and Indian fighter James Bridger; and French-born Benjamin Bonneville, whose parents were friends of Thomas Paine. My favourite is William Sherley (Old Bill) Williams who compiled an English-Osage dictionary, could read Latin and Greek, occasionally kept a diary and sketch book, and tagged his furs 'Wm S Smith, MT' (Master Trapper) ¹⁵

¹⁴Basil Steers personal comment September 1989

¹⁵Biographies are contained in LR Hafen (ed), *Mountain Men and Fur Traders of the Far West*, Lincoln, USA, 1982

Many American trappers had several native 'wives',¹⁶ whereas hunting in The Reserve was overwhelmingly male. The author has only found two occasions when women accompanied the hunters, the 1923 party around Lake Ayr¹⁷ and Paddy Hartnett's wife, Lucy. The latter case was unusual because Lucy and son Billy stayed with Paddy and George Sloane at Pelion East. In a concession to childhood, George made a small cart, remains of which is still near the hut.¹⁸ The norm was for the wives to remain in the low country and, with the assistance of neighbours and older children, keep domestic routines operating. In the case of Hartnetts, the family kept the Liena store and Post Office operating. Many snarers' wives probably agreed with Nell William's assertion that her mother was akin to Henry Lawson's archetypal 'The Drover's Wife'.¹⁹ In Lucy Hartnett's case, Paddy's love of bushlife meant that she had to shift house several times because of Paddy's impulsive behaviour, endure his bouts of drinking, and his disappearance for months at a time. Thus Lucy assumed responsibility for rearing seven children and keeping the family alive.²⁰ Margaret Steers recalled more typical difficulties — bringing-up young children, sometimes not hearing from her husband Basil for eight to twelve weeks and fearing the worst when bad weather struck. For many women, the sense of powerlessness was at times overwhelming.²¹

Eccentricity fostered by isolation is a trait often associated with individual hunters. This observation however ignores the greater individuality preceding the 1950s before mass education and ubiquitousness of mass media homogenised society. Many typical characteristics — such as ability to work long hours and being inured to hardship and adaptability — are as applicable to humanity as a whole as they are

¹⁶Billington, *The Westward Movement in the United States*, p 51 for development of rendezvous

¹⁷*Weekly Courier* 30 August 1923

¹⁸Transcript: 'The beginning of a life of a mother'. Lucy Hartnett interviewed by Nell Williams

¹⁹Lucy Hartnett 'The beginning of a life of a mother'

²⁰Lucy Hartnett 'The beginning of a life of a mother'

²¹Margaret Steers personal comment March 1997

to these high country hunters. Assertions of uniqueness for these North American and Australian frontiersmen are illusions often fostered by a romanticised and inaccurate view of the past, and by groups such as traditional recreationalists, who mythologise the past in an attempt to legitimise current political practice.²² There is also a tendency for oral history to present a romanticised view emphasising excitement and the unusual. In reality a snarer's life was one of routine and hard work with elements of danger and excitement rarely intruding on daily rhythms.

Yet myths contained elements of truth. Most high country snarers contended with extreme cold and heavy snowfalls. Bill Steers remembered twenty seven consecutive frosts round Lake Ayr while heavy snowfalls were more frequent than in the last 20-30 years. While heavy, the falls were not uniform with the more exposed northern and central Reserve experiencing heavier falls than in the south. Bill Steers spoke of drifts fifteen thick on the Ossa saddle in the 1930s near Christmas, while others recollected big falls in 1915, 1918-1919, 1921, 1943, 1945 and 1946. George Bott spoke of snow three feet deep covering the Upper Forth-Pelion West country for over three weeks in 1919. Throughout the Central Highlands the winters of 1945 and 1946 were severe, some game remaining deep frozen for several weeks. Similarly, necessity could indeed be the mother of invention. Basil Steers recalled how some snarers made snow shoes from King Billy Pine. Boards about 2'6" were cut, and a boot upper was bolted to the board. Then the snarer's normal hob-nail boot was inserted to complete a snow shoe.²³

The death of Bert Hanson in 1905 was an indication that the fickle weather could exact a tragic toll. Hanson, a seventeen year old, and Thomas Jones of Wilmot were

²²For North America see F J Turner, *The Frontier in American history*, New York, 1921 and Billington, *The Westward Movement in the United States*, & for Australia see R Ward, *The Australian Legend*, Melbourne, 1965 & Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings of a naturalist*, pp. 215-16

²³Basil Steers personal comment March 1986. His boot was made by Bill Price of Sheffield

hunting probably in the Little Lake area under the eastern shadow of Cradle when they became disoriented in thick fog. Jones' evidence was somewhat contradictory: initially he claimed they were prospecting but later admitted snaring. After four days of aimless wandering without food, they finally sighted the location of their camp. With Hanson too weak to walk, Jones returned to camp for provisions. On his return he was unable to find his mate with thick snow exacerbating the difficulty of the task. Further complications ensued on reporting the matter to police. After two unsuccessful searches Wilmot farmer Bob Quaile found the body. The verdict was 'death by want of food and exposure to the weather.'²⁴

Periodisation

Kangaroo hunters may have frequented the eastern boundaries of The Reserve within a decade and a half of settlement. From around 1820 this group were joined by shepherds and stockmen on Central Plateau leases. Even at this stage at least one pen raised concerning 'wanton slaughter of kangaroos'.²⁵ The writer hoped that stock-keepers would not be encouraged by a reduction on import duty into England to 5%. Instead the surprising argument urged these men to kill beautifully plumed birds for the attire of London ladies of fashion.²⁶ By the late 1830s/early 1840s when the first leases were taken up around Lake St Clair, hunters sold or bartered skins and kept meat for personal consumption. Stockmen and shepherds, in the south and the north, had ample time for such activities. A reputation for lawlessness stemming from atrocities committed on Aborigines and their links with bushrangers and stocktheft persisted.

²⁴*Examiner* 12 September 1905

²⁵*Hobart Town Courier* 14 February 1829

²⁶*Hobart Town Courier* 14 February 1829

Regulations began in 1846 when legislation was passed to restrain the 'practice of Kangaroo Shooting'.²⁷ Annual licences, £1, were introduced for hunting kangaroo with dogs or shooting on land unowned or legally occupied land. Provisions did not apply to owners or lessees or persons granted permission by such people. Penalties for illegal hunting or non-possession of licence were harsh.²⁸ By controlling vagrants with neither permanent residence nor fixed occupation who lived 'in remote and unfrequented places', authorities were attempting to reduce stock theft rather than preserving the kangaroo population.²⁹ In an amendment three years later, licences were restricted to specified districts and significantly snaring was mentioned as a form of killing.³⁰

During the next phase snaring became widespread. In 1859 HM Hull indicated that abundant kangaroos near Frenchman's Cap were 'easily taken by snares'.³¹ He noted the prevalence of possum hunting, a 'sport entailing some trouble and not much profit', as an antidote to monotony.³² Tanneries required large numbers of skins and a Launcestonian furrier wanted 500 dozen possum skins and 200 dozen native cat skins.³³ Kangaroo skins were used in making shoes, while wallaby and possum skin rugs were highly regarded.³⁴ Although legislation to protect native

²⁷10° Vict. No. 6 However, Boyce, 'A Dog's Breakfast', p. 208 notes that despite controlling regulations enforcement was much more difficult. Similarly p. 211 for the 1830s.

²⁸10° Vict. No. 6 Sect IV allowed for a maximum of two years imprisonment with hard labour

²⁹10° Vict. No. 6 Preamble and Sect XI; Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings*, pp. 212-4 thought the 'shooter's life one of the happiest and most independent in the colony full of contentment and health.'

³⁰13° Vict No 7 Sect III for districts and Sect II for snaring

³¹Hull, *Forty years in Tasmania*, p. 73 & for biographical details see RL Wettenhall, 'Hugh Munro Hull' *ADB* Vol 4, pp. 441-2 & L Andel, *Clerk of the House: the Reminiscences of Hugh Munro Hull 1818-1882*, Melbourne, 1984

³²Hull, *Forty years in Tasmania*, pp. 24 & 33

³³*Examiner* 4 July 1863

³⁴Gunn's party used these rugs in trips to St Clair, see Chapter 3. Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 33 asserts that 60 skins were required for a rug which sold for between £2 and £2.10 For use in shoes see H Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Launceston, 1993, p. 428 kangaroo skins made 'admirable leather' for uppers of boots and shoes; Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings*, pp. 44-6 describes the manufacture of boots and asserts that the best were those from Van Diemen's Land, made by shepherds

game (birds) during the breeding season and black swans was passed in 1860,³⁵ a petition for similar treatment for kangaroos failed. The petitioners' motives were varied: reducing disturbance to flocks, ensuring hunting for sportsmen and providing 'a bill of fare'. As well they considered snaring a 'destructive practice'.³⁶ For the next nineteen years there were no attempts to enact similar legislation for kangaroos.

Between 1879 and 1905 there were a series of acts which attempted to ensure long term survival of species. Close seasons, initially for kangaroo, brush and forest in 1879, and five years later for opossums, all species of the genus *Phalangista*, black, grey and ringtails, were introduced.³⁷ For both the close season began on 1 August, but the ending of the season only coincided between 1889 and 1895.³⁸ This meant that snarers were not able to keep possums captured in kangaroo or wallaby snares before the open season for possum commenced. This potential for dispute between snarers and authorities remained unresolved until the banning of snaring in 1974. Gradually legislation became more protective: the hunting season was reduced for both species, the 1895 Act prohibited the killing of Forester kangaroo, possums and platypus for two years³⁹ while a 1902 Act enacted a similar measure but only for possums.⁴⁰ One portent was the reserving of breeding grounds for mutton birds in 1888.⁴¹ Possession of skins or carcasses during the

³⁵24° Vict No 19 & 24° Vict No 20, 1860 respectively. In England game initially referred to birds but extended to rabbits and deer. See Earl of Halsbury (ed) *The Laws of England*, London 1911, pp. 208-9 for a summary. The section on Game Laws, pp. 207-264 was compiled by JFP Rawlinson & KE Chalmers

³⁶'Petition from Prosser's Plains and Triabunna', *TPP* [H of A], 1860, No. 72

³⁷Game Protection Act, 1879 42° Vict No 24 & Game Protection Act 1884 48° Vict No 35. The notion of close seasons mirrors that of England, see Halsbury *The Laws of England*, pp. 209-10

³⁸For kangaroos Close seasons began on 1 August but the end date was extended from 30 January in the year following in 1879 to 31 March in 1889, see Game Protection Act, 1879 42° Vict No 24 & Game Protection Amendment Act, 1889 53° Vict No. 23; for possums the dates were 31 March in 1884, Game Protection Act 1884 48° Vict No 35, to 30 April in 1895, Game Protection Act, 1895, 59° Vict No. 26, and 31 May in 1898, Game Protection Act, 1898, 62° Vict No. 42

³⁹Game Protection Act 1895 59° Vict No. 26

⁴⁰Game Protection Amendment Act, 1902 2° Edw VII No. 21

⁴¹Game Protection Amendment Act, 1888, 52° Vict No. 40

close season was an offence, thus reversing the usual onus of proof for the accused. Administration of acts was the responsibility of rural municipalities, although The Reserve was not under the jurisdiction of any body.⁴² Licences for hunting were still necessary and by 1896 cost £4 annually.⁴³

This period coincided with Australia-wide movements to preserve fauna and flora and in Tasmania, as seen in Chapter 5, the Royal Society and AAAS, were to the fore. Some individuals were prominent. Events in The Reserve mirrored state wide concerns. Surveyor Ewart attributed the scarcity of game while surveying between Mt Pelion and Gormanston in 1901 to their wanton destruction

by hunters during the close season. Kangaroo, wallaby and badger are slaughtered wholesale for the sake of procuring the skins, and unless stricter supervision is exercised the animals mentioned will be exterminated in this portion of the State.⁴⁴

Although RE Smith labelled the 1890s 'The Dark Age of Cradle Mountain' because only hunters and prospectors frequented the area, the label is equally appropriate to preceding periods. As well as providing ready access to hunting grounds, the expanding network of tracks resulting from the route wars facilitated movement of people and supplies at the commencement and conclusion of seasons. Increasing numbers of hunters, although few in total, snared The Reserve and contiguous areas, especially Cradle country, Pelion Plains and the valleys of Travellers Rest and Cuvier Rivers. The thieving activity of the 'Destroying Angel' from JW Lord's Swallow Plain camp near Lake Windemere in 1900 is one of the first references to an individual hunter. Apart from evidence that the miscreant's main occupation was hunting and snaring kangaroo and possum, there are no clues as to identity.⁴⁵ One

⁴²See Rural Municipalities Act, 1865, 29° Vict No. 8, Schedule 2

⁴³HTG 4 August 1896; for a summary of the situation in England see Halisbury, *The Laws of England*, pp. 246-254

⁴⁴R Ewart, 'Report on Track Mt Pelion towards Gormanston, via Eldon Bluff', pp. 37-38 in Department of Lands and Surveys: report for 1901-1902, *TPP*, 1902, No. 42, p. 38

⁴⁵*Tasmanian Mail* 28 April 1900

recognised hunter was Harry Andrews, based on the Borradaile Plains, who snared and prospected widely throughout the Northern reserve from the 1890s until World War I. The existing pattern of stockmen/shepherds hunting persisted as exemplified by George Francis who was based at Middlesex from about 1870.⁴⁶ Kletterer's party met a kangaroo hunter south of the Iris River in April 1898.⁴⁷ Subsequently, bushwalker Geoff Lambert asserted that Tullah kangaroo hunters, using the Innes Track as access, established permanent camps in the vicinity of Barn Bluff.⁴⁸

The Game Protection Act 1905 hinted at new directions in administration of fauna. For the first time the Governor had power, by proclamation in the *Hobart Gazette* to prohibit hunting during the open season in specified areas. Thus legislators were now comprehending that areas required different management regimes. Responsibility for administration was transferred from rural municipalities to the Department of Lands and consequently licence fees became part of consolidated revenue. The Department's concerns were palpable with their annual report fearing that the 'beautiful' brush possum would soon be extinct while high prices for kangaroo skins encouraged idlers to 'make illicit hunting their only occupation.'⁴⁹ The Department suggested close seasons forgetting that enforcement was difficult and in remote areas such as The Reserve, almost impossible.

Perhaps these views influenced the Game Protection Act, 1907, which imposed further restrictions. Licences were further tightened, with hunting restricted to Crown Land, waste or leased, and, with permission, freehold. Police were

⁴⁶G Weindorfer & G Francis, 'Wild life in Tasmania', *Victorian Naturalist*, Vol XXXVI, March 1920, pp. 157-160 & G Weindorfer & G Francis, 'Wild life in Tasmania', *Victorian Naturalist*, Vol XXXVI, April 1920, pp. 165-168

⁴⁷Kletterer 'On The Top of Tasmania', *Tasmanian Mail* 2 April 1898; the hunter was possibly Charles Davey

⁴⁸G Lambert, 'Innes Track - Liena to Rosebery', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No 22, 1976, p. 59

⁴⁹Department of Lands & Surveys report for 1905-6', *TPP* 1906, No. 46, p. 10

empowered to search for skins or carcasses 'reasonably supposed to be there in contravention of this Act.' The killing of playtpus was forbidden.⁵⁰ Other conditions remained in force. Thus in 1908 the taking of kangaroo and possum was prohibited for a year in the County of Lincoln.⁵¹ However, the passing of legislation was easier than its enforcement. Illegal hunting continued, with claims that 'the Game Act is being evaded Every Day in the out season is no secret to anyone.'⁵²

After close seasons in 1910 and 1911,⁵³ more hunters began frequenting The Reserve as improved access permitted them taking advantage of distant hunting grounds. Also relevant were the southward expansion of settlement to Liena and Lorinna, and growth of centres such as Wilmot associated with the Middlesex mining fields.⁵⁴ Wilmot men were prominent with the Connells frequenting the Cradle-Lake Rodway area from either 1912 or 1914. Several northerners ventured southward, but there are no indications of the reverse movement. Liena/Lorinna hunters such as Paddy Hartnett and later Bert Nicholls ventured southward to the Pine and Cuvier valleys. That relative *terra incognita* — the country between Pelion and Du Cane Gaps — became important. The Never Never in the Upper Mersey, Pinestone Valley, Kia Ora Creek and open plains under Mt Ossa were frequented especially after Hartnett built his Du Cane hut circa 1910. Normally, but not always, access was via the Central Plateau-Walls of Jerusalem, from Howell's Plains, The

⁵⁰Game Protection Act 1907, 7° Edw VII No. 53

⁵¹TG 24 March 1908 to apply from 1 April 1908

⁵²*Weekly Courier* 15 October 1908. A Launceston advertisement for '1,000 good platypus skins, no rubbish taken' as proof of fears.

⁵³TGG 24 May 1910 & 2 May 1911 from 19 May for one year

⁵⁴Harry Vernham and Charlie Johnstone snared in the Middlesex-Cradle area around 1908, *Advocate* 29 July 1961 contains recollections of Alan Quaile. Gustav Weindorfer stayed in hunters' huts around 1910. G Weindorfer, 'Two botanists in the Cradle Mountains, Tasmania', *Victorian Naturalist*, Vol XXVIII (12) April 1912 p. 216 & for Dove Lake hut already several years old in 1910 see G Weindorfer, 'Holidays in the Cradle Mtns', *Weekly Courier* 6 October 1910. Es Connell, whose family owned *Waldheim* and later a park ranger, recalled that the Windemere hut was used as a base for hunting before the 1910s. Esrom Connell personal comment April 1990

Paddocks and Kia Ora, and from Pelion Plains. In the absence of licence details which were destroyed, it is hard to be precise about exact hunting locations.

A narrative of a quartet who departed the west coast along the Linda track towards St Clair in 1906 illuminates prevailing conditions. Silence about names, motives and past hunting activities tantalises readers. Underlying the report, *A Tasmanian Winter Camp*, was the assumption that camp life brought forth 'all that is brightest and best in manhood'.⁵⁵ In some ways it was a parable of the superiority and purity of rural over urban life. With each man carrying more than 50lbs, while their mule's burden was over sixfold, the group reached St Clair on the evening of the second day. Two days of searching and four building the party had a log hut in a narrow but elongated montane valley (two wide by 10 long) seven miles from St Clair. Then they established a routine of hunting only alternate days because neither man nor dogs 'could stand the work every day in succession'.⁵⁶ On the other days the pair pegged out skins, cut wood and prepared meals. This rhythm persisted until early May when shortage of supplies forced them to walk 19 miles through snow at least two feet thick to the Pearces at Clarence River. Four 200 lb bags of flour, the most important of all provisions, were carried and dragged back to the base camp.

Observations about hunting methods, game and weather dominate the account. It was noted that 'a heavy fall of snow is fatal to kangaroos; it is in fact a surer trap than any ever invented by human hands'⁵⁷ and that mongrel dogs were better adapted to the snow conditions than pure breeds. After locating prints in soft snow, four dogs pursued and killed a 'hyena or dog' after a long struggle. The account gives a fleeting glimpse of reactions to returning to camp after a day's hunting.

⁵⁵*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

⁵⁶*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

⁵⁷*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

What a welcome sight it was to us to see glimmering through the darkness across the plain of snow the light of our campfire as we struggled onward buried to our armpits in the white mantle surrounding us, with our legs half frozen, our whiskers stuck together with icicles; and the spoils of the chase suspended across our shoulders.⁵⁸

The winter was severe and towards the end of June, 3-4 ft long icicles hung from the inside of the roof and the men dislodged snow from roof to prevent the collapse of the building. There were also rewards, ninety one dozen thick kangaroo skins which, when sold on 1 August returned a 'nice little banking account to our credit'. Hard work was not injurious as each returned at least half a stone heavier.⁵⁹

Further stimulus for reform came from a realisation of the necessity for further controls over hunting in the National Park, 1916. In 1919 the Animals' and Birds' Protection Act⁶⁰ was passed. Control was vested in the Police with the Commissioner of Police becoming Chief Inspector under the act, and every police officer an inspector. Existing controls such as declaration of close seasons, and proclamation of reserved areas now designated sanctuaries were retained. Some areas were more strictly defined with taking of animals specified to include 'use of dog, gun, net, snare, trap, or other engine, instrument, or device', although guns with a bore 'greater than No. 12' were prohibited. Inspectors were given stronger enforcement powers, such as the ability to remove an offender from a reserve or sanctuary. Licences were now restricted to unoccupied or leased Crown lands. In recognition that commercial demand was the driving force of the industry, skin buyers and sellers were now licensed. Hunters had to have details of their seasons catch identified and recorded within fourteen days of the end of the open season and no sales were to occur without this official authorisation. The platypus and echidna remained wholly protected; thylacines, native and tiger cats, Tasmanian devils and

⁵⁸*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

⁵⁹*Weekly Courier* 26 May 1906

⁶⁰10° Geo V No 56

wombats remained unprotected. It was not until March 1920 that regulations were gazetted.⁶¹

Following 'unprecedented slaughter', during 1919 and 1920, and nearly the same levels in 1917 and 1918, 1920 and 1921 were close seasons throughout the state. In March 1922 several politicians, including future Australian Prime Minister JA Lyons, campaigned for an open season to help the unemployed and requested an early decision be made so that snarers could be prepared. The opposing arguments — low prices, and the destruction of the fur trade and an almost 'complete extermination of game in the greater part of the state'⁶² — held sway. At the same time there were fifty three 'guardians ... who through desire to see the Game Laws observed, and for the preservation of native fauna, consented to act in an honorary capacity.'⁶³ This then was the *status quo* until the declaration of a scenic reserve in May 1922. Almost a year later Clive Lord's party noted that game was not plentiful in the Cuvier Valley, perhaps due to the remains of snares and skinning areas containing numerous kangaroo carcasses.⁶⁴

Another newspaper account, while being of later provenance than this thesis, sheds light on this period. It told of an unusually large party of ten snaring around Lake Ayr for four months. Their sojourn was profitable, 8,000 skins comprising 1,000 brush possum, 4,000 kangaroo and 3,000 wallaby, which it was claimed would return the group £2,500? if the previous year's prices were maintained. Government also profitted reaping £150 in royalties. However, there are no details of how profits

⁶¹TGG 23 March 1920. Hunters required a licence, £10 pa & 10/- for hunting on Crown Land & private land, & a licence to sell skins taken from Crown Land 1/-. To buy & sell skins a dealer paid £10 and each agent £5. Skins had to be stamped and/or marked. Again the English influence is palpable, see Halisbury, *The Laws of England*, pp. 254-262

⁶²*Examiner* 11 February, 4, 8, 9 & 20 March 1922. Other politicians were J Guy & G Becker

⁶³'Annual report for the Police Department for 1920-21', *TPP*, 1921-22, No. 23, p. 3

⁶⁴C Lord, 'Westward Ho — A Trip to St Clair', unpublished manuscript, University of Tasmania archives

were shared. The account highlighted the dangerous: Aylett and Parsons nearly succumbing to hypothermia when waist high snow obliterated all signs of the track on their return to camp. Man's best friend lived up to his reputation being an invaluable guide, especially over the last three quarters of a mile which took four hours. Also remarkable was the presence of a hunter's wife.⁶⁵

In 1925 the *Examiner* told of the hard work, long hours and 'well trained mind and hands [required] to make a success of hunting'. The paper described other prerequisites such as setting hundreds of snares and then refinding them and the ability to walk at least ten miles a day along rough pads.⁶⁶ Few drew distinction between appreciation of the myriad skills required for hunting and the killing of game. Since then there has rarely been a favorable press for the hunters. The rise of the animal rights movement, the greening of society, and furs' fall from fashion have been keys to the downfall of snarer-hunters throughout the 'world. That more is made of Weindorfer's ability to relate to native fauna than his snaring illustrates this point. The latter was a very useful supplement to finances, especially when tourists were few. From at least 1913 Weindorfer snared in Cradle valley and Hounslow Heath and exported skins to Europe because prices were higher than mainland ones. His sister investigated the possibility of sales to German and Austrian buyers.⁶⁷ Random extracts from the Smith Papers are illuminating: in May 1919 125 possum skins were sent to buyers, cyanide and a bottle of aniseed were needed for a thousand baits.⁶⁸ Dorfer's diaries are replete with references to

⁶⁵*Weekly Courier* 30 August 1923. The party was composed of Messrs Parsons, Aylett, Shepherd, Brender, Tuson (Lance and ?) Nicholls, Davis(2) and Wilson

⁶⁶*Examiner* 19 August 1925

⁶⁷G Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, Hobart, 1959, p.35 & M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, Launceston, 1987, pp. 40 & 55

⁶⁸NS 234/19/130 May 1919 R Smith to G Weindorfer re skins; 21 March 1920 G Weindorfer to R Smith re ringtail & 1 May 1920 R Smith to G Weindorfer re bait

hunting and mixing with snarers, yet only Haygarth adequately treats this aspect of Dorfer's life.⁶⁹

Book of Snaring

The craft of snaring embraced many arcane intricacies, from discerning signs of nature to the adoption of ingenious techniques. As in most fields of human endeavour, few became master craftsman because of the number of skills to be mastered. Although this concept of the 'Book of Snaring' or expertise in landscape observation and bushcraft draws on the observations of English novelist and traveller GF Ruxton about beaver hunters in the Rockies in 1847. The trappers were, so Ruxton asserted

keen observers of nature, [and] rival beasts of prey in discovering the haunts and habits of game, and in their skills and cunning in capturing it.

As well the trapper's

eagle eye sweeps round the country, and in instant detects any foreign appearance. A turned leaf, a blade of grass pressed down, the uneasiness of the wild animals, the flight of birds, are all paragraphs to him written in the nature's legible hand and plainest language.⁷⁰

Similarly relevant were the experiences of English poachers outlined earlier in the chapter. In Tasmania, Geoffrey Smith in 1907-8 marvelled at the extraordinary skill of shepherds and trappers on moonlight winter nights to find

their way about the forest without any apparent landmarks to go by. It frequently struck me that the shepherds and men familiar with the bush were able to recognise individual trees and logs in an apparent chaotic forest, much in the same way that a Londoner learns to know shops and houses in the street, and they certainly pick up the tracks of a Kangaroo or any native animal with unerring certainty.⁷¹

⁶⁹N Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff: Philosopher Smith and the birth of Tasmanian mining*, Perth, 2004, p. 71

⁷⁰GF Ruxton, *Adventures in Mexico and the Rocky Mountains 1849*, quoted in RA Billington, *The Westward Movement in the United States*, New York, 1959, p. 132

⁷¹G.Smith, *A naturalist in Tasmania*, Oxford, 1909, p. 87

Within the informal boundaries of hunting areas or runs — usually but not always recognised by peers — snarers determined the best location for snarelines to maximise catches. Some snarers established smaller camps about a day's travel from base camp. Hunters sought signs of game on areas devoid of vegetation such as mud patches and sandy spots or noted the scratchings on bark and scats or droppings, carcasses and sounds. The type of print, the presence of broken twigs and leaves, indicated the species. Knowledge of habits of fauna such as preferred locales, and ability to read weather signs, were other useful skills. This body of knowledge, the product of experience and keen observational powers, formed a coherent picture which predetermined specific responses. Normally information, such that ringtail possums rarely inhabited myrtle country, was restricted to the individual and his hunting companions. Exceptions to this were G Francis and Weindorfer whose observations, in the case of the former based on half a century of experience, were published in the *Victorian Naturalist*.⁷²

An early chapter in the Tasmanian book of snaring dealt with spring burn-offs to encourage new growth and thus game. Autumnal chapters were concerned with preliminary preparations, including hut repair or construction as bushfires and heavy snowfalls took their toll of huts and drying sheds. The better-prepared might cut firewood used for warmth, cooking and drying skins so that the open season could be devoted to hunting. Parts of snares such as pegs, headsticks and springes were cut and sometimes carted to appropriate spots along the snare lines. To accustom game to their presence, some also set pegs and springes ready for the final setting of the snare.

Recognition of the components of a good hunting area was essential. Plentiful supply of timber for construction of huts and firewood was a pre-requisite. Thus

⁷²Weindorfer & Francis, 'Wild life in Tasmania', March 1920, pp. 157-160

huts were often located near stands of easily split timber such as King Billy Pine or stringy bark eucalypts. Less frequently myrtle was used. A sound hut could be erected within two to three days. Some hunters combined drying shed and shelter hut under one roof, while others separated the two. If the snarer engaged in out-of-season activity, the drying shed was usually located at a distance from the hut with Hartnett's hollowed myrtle log a variant of the latter. Usually the floor was earthen or slabs with a bunk or bunks along a wall, bench and shelves, and camp stools key features of huts. Usually a large chimney, sometimes wooden, lined with stones, occupied one end of the hut. In other cases when the smoke escaped through cracks in the roof and walls there was a strong resemblance to the blackhouses of Scotland. Weindorfer described a Dove Valley hunter's hut made from King Billy as being 14x14, with a huge fireplace at one end, two bunks strewn with grass, a slab floor and a bag doorway.⁷³ Less frequent was the fire being in the middle of the floor, with the gable at one end left open to allow smoke to exit such as at Lake Ayr. Some preferred earth floors believing that raised wooden floors caused draughts. Lighting was either from candles or lamps or firelight. Crockery and cutlery were basic with some using empty jam tins as small billies. Camp ovens, frying pans and billies were the main cooking utensils with better established camps having some saucepans.

The men's clothing was similar to that of lowland rural workers or west coast miners with differences reflecting much colder weather. Hartnett's garb of old grey flannel, heavy bluey coat, dungarees, with puttees made from ripped up old blankets encasing the lower leg from upper boot to below the knee and toe 'dodgers' of flannel or blanket the adaptations to the environment, was typical of many snarers.

⁷³Weindorfer, 'Holidays in the Cradle Mtns'. S Cubit, 'Buildings of the fur trade: an introduction to Tasmanian skin sheds and snaring huts', pp. 10-18, *Historic Environment*, Vol 14(1), 1998 identifies different types in the Upper Mersey. However, a somewhat ahistorical approach casts doubts over his typology.

Figure 29: Snarer's Huts



(a) Paddy Hartnett's East Pelion Camp



(b) Lake Ayr Hut

Others substituted moleskins or denim for dungaree trousers. Headware reflected individuality with Hartnett renowned for his Boxer or hard hitter. Hob-nailed leather boots were standard, with beeswax or fat scraped from pelts used for waterproofing. Here Hartnett added the personal touch with boots three sizes too large presumably to avoid blisters by the wearing of at least two pairs of socks.⁷⁴

Neck snares,⁷⁵ the main instrument of capturing wallaby and kangaroo, were located around the fringes of open tussocky country where wallaby browsed. To entice wallaby, cheese bush, when available, was placed around snares. Usually snares consisted of two 15 to 18 foot pegs, about six to eight inches apart, sunk into the ground along pads or paths of game. A couple of inches from the top of each peg, a notch was cut to facilitate the swift removal of the head stick when game was snared. A springe was located to one side and almost in a straight line with the pegs. According to whether wallaby or kangaroo was the expected catch, the length varied from six to ten feet, while lighter springe were used in rocky ground to avoid excessive strain. As strength and flexibility were desired characteristics, tea-tree, waratah, myrtle or dogwood was used depending on availability. The springe was bowed and attached by hempen cord to a head stick with a slip noose or bowline. When the animal entered the loop, the cord formed a tight knot around its neck and caused asphyxiation. The head stick slipped out of the notch thus releasing the tension on the springe which jerked back leaving the carcase dangling. Removal of the carcase involved the loosening of the cord before resetting. However, if knots were variations of a granny this was time consuming as cords were unravelled and retied. A major problem with the snare was that it caught all animals, regardless of species, age or sex that ventured along the pad. As indicated earlier, with possum

⁷⁴Nell Williams personal comment 8 November 1980

⁷⁵Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings of a naturalist*, pp. 19-28 describes the different methods of killing — coursing, snaring & shooting — in Port Phillip

Figure 30: Snaring



(a) Neck Snare



(b) Foot Snare

and kangaroo seasons not coinciding, retention of a possum involved potential prosecution.

Some preferred the foot snare or treadle, described earlier by Gates, which as the name implies, caught the animal by the leg. In attempting to free themselves, animals would frequently be damaged and thus diminish the value of the fur. In the muddier montane regions there was increased possibility of the fur becoming dirty. Another disadvantage was the tendency for the many thick frosts to release or spring snares.

A different technique was used for kangaroos which, unlike wallabies, preferred open country. The wire snare or drag, a heavy gauged wire loop, several inches in diameter, was tied to or forced into a springe securely wedged into the ground, rocks or behind trees. Once the kangaroo put his head through and realised that the drag was tightening, it would lunge forward in an endeavour to escape and in so doing would choke itself to death.

Devils attacked carcasses remaining in the snare. Similarly, the wombat wreaked havoc by destroying wire snares when trying to extricate itself after capture. Weindorfer and Francis claimed that thousands annually of this 'most stupid of all animals of the bush' were destroyed.⁷⁶ Less common, but still a nuisance, were currawongs or black jays which attacked the snared game.

Dogs were used to capture game, although the tendency for most breeds to damage pelts by biting indiscriminately was always a problem. A notable exception was the black and tan kelpie, which according to Basil Steers, attacked the throat and thus

⁷⁶Weindorfer & Francis, 'Wild life in Tasmania', March 1920, pp. 158-9

Figure 31: Hunting-Snaring



(a) Necker for kangaroos



(b) Possum Snare



(c) Possum Trap

Figure 31: Carbide Lamps

for shooting at nights and sometimes for lighting in camps



1 cwt. Drums: Special Screw Top
2 Cwt. Drums: Friction Top

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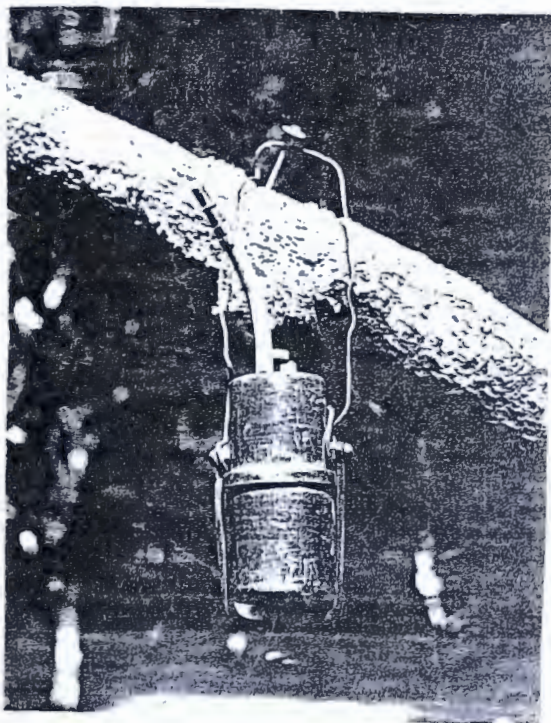


Figure 32: Dogging on the Snow



minimised damage.⁷⁷ In particular dogging was invaluable on the snow but, as earlier indicated, damage to paws and lack of stamina meant frequent periods of recuperation were essential. Dogs were used more frequently in the first half of the 20th century especially around the northern and southern extremities of The Reserve. Less frequent was the combination of pointing by dogs and shooting which usually resulted in quicker death and undamaged skins.⁷⁸

Possums were usually taken by shooting, trapping or snaring or the two in combination. In the case of the latter, a spar or possum pole was cut and leant against a tree revealing signs of heavy traffic ie claw and scratch marks on the bark. Then either a trap, usually a rabbit trap, or a wire snare was used. The latter was a 3 to 4' diameter loop of twisted brass wire attached to a small peg forced into a crack made by an axe on the possum pole. The snare or rabbit trap was placed sufficiently high on the pole to avoid devils and prevent injury to pelts from contact with the ground.⁷⁹ To entice possums from trees, snarers sometimes spread carrots or apples, occasionally coated with aniseed, on the ground for a couple of days before setting the snare. A major problem with rabbit traps was that they were much heavier and bulkier than snares, a major disadvantage over an extended snare line. A higher proportion of ringtails than brush possums were shot because they preferred trees to the ground. Overall most snared, because in the words of skin buyer John Edwards, 'snaring used to produce the best-quality furs because the hunter would set his traps only where he knew he would catch the best skins.'⁸⁰

The fur's value was reduced by a bullet hole. Moonlight, or artificial light, a candle in front of some reflective shield and later a carbide lamp,⁸¹ enhanced the hunter's

⁷⁷Basil Steers personal comment 7 June 1983

⁷⁸For use of dogs in 19th century Victoria, see Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings*, pp. 19-20

⁷⁹Hull, *Forty Years in Tasmania*, p. 33

⁸⁰A Dennis, 'Adventures in the Skin Trade', *Good Weekend, Australian* pp. 10-15

⁸¹Carbide lamps were becoming widespread in the 1920s

chances of shooting through the head. Dogs trained to point out the possum scent would stand barking at the foot of a tree in which resided a possum

Tigers could be taken in snares although some hunters used dogs. Most dogs fled from thylacines, although Hartnett's stagdog, a kelpie-greyhound cross, was successful.⁸² Similarly, the party from *A Tasmanian Winter Camp* relied overwhelmingly on dogging. Thylacines roamed throughout The Reserve especially the southern area. Here the Pearces were the most prominent but by no means the only successful hunters. The west coasters above mentioned were another group. Bill Steers thought the country at the back of Ossa was promising country, while Hartnett captured one when based at East Pelion and believed that when the snows were bad, thylacines would head towards Kia Ora. There were sightings and captures on the adjacent February Plains and The Paddocks and from GA Robinson's time there were reports of thylacines on Middlesex Plains.

At the commencement of the season or when operations shifted to a new run, snares and traps were checked daily. Removing animals from snares was an easy task when the carcase was cold but if warm, patches of fur fell out whenever touched by hand. To skin a warm animal was thus an indicator of competence. With kangaroo and wallaby, the hunter cut around the tail, up the stomach, hind legs and then front paws before peeling the skin from the body. The major difference with possum was that all the tail was taken. An exception occurred for the rare rock belly possum with a creamy front. It was skinned down the back to preserve the unique colour. If a hind quarter was not required to replenish the larder, carcases were thrown away to provide a welcome addition to tigers, devils and avian predators such as eagles.

⁸²Bill Steers personal comment 18 January 1980

Pelts were loosely tied to avoid blood stains and then carried in game bags, often chaff bags which carried 30-40 skins, back to camp.⁸³

Pegging out, which occurred at either the hut or separate drying shed, was equally crucial to ensuring a quality skin. Legs, front and then hind, were pegged securely before the middle. Nails were driven in at approximately two inch intervals to retain an overall rectangular shape. Excess fat was removed to reduce drying time. Maintenance of correct heat was vital: if the fire was too hot skins would crack, if too cool mould became a problem. Skins were removed from the walls the following morning or more usually the next night. (Thus the longevity of a hut could be partly determined by walls dotted with innumerable nail holes.) Then skins were stacked in pairs pelt to pelt, fur to fur to ensure grease free furs. Sometimes during, but more frequently at the end of season, skins were packed to the low country where they were brushed remove dirt and sheen the tips. Occasionally skins were redried to remove small damp patches. From 1920 the skins had to be stamped by the police before sales. Immediate sale was desirable but not essential so longevity was assured by sprinkling with naphthalene and storing in dry conditions.⁸⁴

Illegal hunting was a perennial problem after 1884, when close seasons for wallaby and possum ceased to coincide. In 1908 arose another problem when there was a close season for kangaroo and possum on Crown Land but not on private land. Police Commissioner Lord's observation that 'To detect illegal hunting in the back country is an arduous undertaking under the most favorable circumstances' was

⁸³Basil Steers personal comment January 1986; Bill Steers January 1981; A Youd & HD Reed August 1980; Wheelwright, *Bush wanderings of a naturalist*, pp. 5-6 for skinning kangaroos in Victoria

⁸⁴Hull, *Forty years in Tasmania*, p 33 recorded that in the 1840s and 1850s some hunters dried skins in the sun. This was okay in lowlands and before introduction of close seasons. The 1920 regulations were based on the Animals' and Birds' Protection Act, 1919

evocative of difficulties.⁸⁵ Most examples of illegal hunting, however, occurred after the gazetting of a Scenic Reserve.

Conflict over runs between hunters was an aspect of snaring which is difficult to quantify. Usually the gentleman's agreement about location was respected but disputes did arise: Dick Miles recalled that a few black eyes were given and received. It was easy for a hunter to go back into the scrub a couple of hundred yards and set a new line thus cutting off most game from the original snarer's line.⁸⁶ With skins quite valuable in some years, there was always a temptation for theft. Occasionally, but not in The Reserve, murder resulted, as in the case of Thomas Jordan by Richard Parry and O'Brien, and the Packett case.⁸⁷

The concluding chapters in the *Tasmanian Book of Snaring* deal with markets and sales. Prior to sales skin preparation began. A couple of days of brushing skins with a big broom removed dirt and dust and added a sheen to the pelts. Some hunters brushed with a mixture of salt and water to increase weight and thus value while the conscientious also rubbed the pelts with a cloth. While international fashions were beyond the control of the snarers, they had total control over skin presentation.

Sales were communal occasions for both hunters and buyers. Acquaintances were made or renewed, yarns were swapped, and seasons compared. Traditions were

⁸⁵Police Department annual report 1907-08', *TPP* 1908, No. 21, p. 4

⁸⁶Clarke, possibly Hartnett's companion, Ted from Liena or George and Harry Clarke, Fields' shepherds, snared the southern end of the February Plains, had a reputation for being a claim jumper. Arthur Youd corroborated Clarke's activity on Mayfield and the Never Never. A Youd personal comment December 1980; Bill Steers February 1990; George Bott personal comment 11 October 1980 corroborated Clarke as a February Plains hunter, Basil Steers personal comment June 1987. Don Youd, personal comment 8 April 1980, the latter son of Arthur's brother Percy, also a snarer

⁸⁷For the Jordan murder see Jetson, *The Roof of Tasmania*, Launceston, 1989, p. 94 & for Packett, Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, p. 153

maintained or enhanced and the particular town's link with the mountain hinterland strengthened. Probably some youngsters were inspired to emulate the deeds, real and imaginary, of the hunters. While rivalry prevailed most of the year within either group, both had a degree of solidarity. Arthur Youd voiced the concerns of many with the claim of buyer collusion to reduce prices.⁸⁸ To the tangible quality of furs was added further value by intangibles such as hardship endured in obtaining pelts. Subconsciously the snarers wanted this hardship added to the price, a motive ignored by the buyers. Snarers also ignored the range of prices within which buyers operated, for they too had margins of profitability. Nevertheless, the reality was that both buyers and sellers tried to maximise profits. Again hunters' power was limited. If sales were depressed because of surplus skins or lack of demand then there was little the hunters could do. Notable bargaining skills, however, could mean a few extra pounds.

Excitement was palpable in the *Examiner's* account of the 1925 sales at Mole Creek. The arrival of hunters and loads of furs (Ted Gale later estimated that about 50,000 skins were offered to English, French, Italian and German buyers)⁸⁹ disturbed the normal rhythm of small town life. The report told of one whose thirty mile snare line, and over a thousand snares, necessitated three camps and three days for checking. Most hunters were reluctant to agree to initial bids in case better offers were subsequently made. Thus little business was transacted on the Thursday. By Friday midday higher sums were offered and excitement built with final offers and agreement being made by late afternoon. This frenzy can be compared with the final afternoon of the AFL draft. Thousands of pounds changed hands with one buyer writing cheques worth £4,500. Exact sums were hard to obtain as many either under or overestimated to retain reputations as sound

⁸⁸A Youd personal comment 12 April 1980

⁸⁹Ted Gale, 11/19 in Central Plateau Oral History Project, "'What's the Land for?' People's Experience of Tasmania's Central Plateau Region', Vol. 3, Hobart, 1991

bargainers. The *Examiner* believed the money 'put into circulation should help to relieve the serious depression in business that has been evident for some time'.⁹⁰ Hunters and buyers were not the only beneficiaries with shopkeepers, accommodation providers and especially hoteliers profiting. As with the American trappers, most men abstained during the hunting season, but at sales or the American rendez-vous, binges were typical. Then sale-time solidarity could evaporate as quickly as glasses were emptied. Hangover cures were eccentric. Told that aspirin would relieve headaches, Bert Nichols, a believer in 'the more the better maxim', took a whole packet, including wax paper. The next morning staff checking whether the combination of alcohol and aspirin was lethal found a clear-headed Nichols amused by the concern.⁹¹ Es Connell recollected that sales day at Sheffield was 'a great day' for meeting new practitioners, renewing old friendships and discussing the past season.⁹² Lucy Hartnett recalled overhearing skin buyers at Sheffield planning to get Paddy drunk so that he would agree to low prices. After she delayed sale for a day, Paddy and George Sloane received £600 for their skins.⁹³ There was no southern counterpart of the end of season sales at Sheffield and Mole Creek. Hunters dealt with visiting buyers, usually from Hamilton or Bothwell.

Local buyers included representatives of statewide firms such as Wilcox and Mofflin's Roy Johnston and Jack Sullivan, and those based on small towns from different areas of the state such as Gordon Dawson from St Mary's and the Ellis Bros from Kempton. There were even West Coast buyers such as H Hessaenaur of Strahan.⁹⁴ Some buyers such as Norm Croome, Frank Ralph and Cecil Watts also visited Cradle country.⁹⁵ However, the absence of records makes it difficult to

⁹⁰*Examiner* 19 August 1925

⁹¹Basil Steers personal comment April 1986 This occurred at sales at Maddock Hotel, Sheffield

⁹²Esrom Connell personal comment April 1990; similar descriptions are provided by Mary Haberle, *Mountain Reflections*, Don, 1993, p 152

⁹³Lucy Hartnett 'The beginning of a life of a mother'

⁹⁴ZDH 14 April 1905

⁹⁵Esrom Connell personal comment April 1990

ascertain who was involved with the Reserve hunters.⁹⁶ Different measures were used in selling skins: dry kangaroo pelts weighed approximately a pound, and were thus sold this way; there were twelve wallaby per 8lb and possums were disposed individually. In some cases a buyer would take all the skins on an average value. Brush possums were classified as black or grey with the former more commercially valuable. While prices such as kangaroo fetching 12/- in 1920 and declining to 7/6 three years later⁹⁷ are useful, it is relative comparisons with wages of rural labourers and commodity prices that are more valuable.

Most pelts were sold to the mainland with some skins making their way onto international markets, usually European. Possum prices were high in 1907 because of Russian demand.⁹⁸ Unusual was an advertisement for St Louis firm, Fungsten Bros public fur auctions, whose offerings included wallaby, wombat, Australian ringtail and opossums. It is not known if any of these furs came from The Reserve.⁹⁹ In 1920 details of New York sales by the International Fur Exchange and Fur Auction Sales Corporation gave prices and quantities of pelts sold. In both cases over 100,000 ringtail skins were sold and prices had increased by 75%.¹⁰⁰ John Edwards of Neale Edwards Pty Ltd recollected how his firm exported possum skins, average to low grade, 'for the once buoyant international market, where they have ultimately become a feature of a fur coat, the collar or cuff on a jacket, or the lining of a raincoat'.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶E Guiler, 'The Present status of some Tasmanian Mammals in relation to the Fur Industry of Tasmania', *PPRST* 1957 p. 117 laments destruction of details of catches prior to 1947

⁹⁷G Bott personal comment 11 October 1980

⁹⁸*Weekly Courier* & August 1907 black possum 70/-, greys 30/- and ringtail 5/- per dozen. In comparison kangaroo and wallaby reached 34/ and 22/-, native and tiger cats 4/6 & 4/- while platypus were worth 15/- to 24/-

⁹⁹*Examiner* 29 April 1919 for details of purchases by local agent LA Scandrett

¹⁰⁰*ZDH* 13 February 1920

¹⁰¹A Dennis, 'Adventures in the Skin Trade', p. 13

Figure 33: Fur Sales

Funsten Bros. & Co.,

PUBLIC AUCTION FUR SALES.

International Fur Exchange, Inc.

St. Louis, U.S.A.

1919 April Sale

1000 Dressed, Dyed, and Machined	171,000 Marmots.	30,000 Australian Fox.
Alaska Fur Seal Skins (account	1,300 Stone Marten.	850 Karagon Fox.
of U.S.A. Government).	9,000 Marten.	6,300 Macedonian Fox.
700 Dressed and Dyed Seal Skins (ac-	900,000 Moles.	70,000 Wolf.
count of other shippers).	1,400 Silver Fox.	1,800 Patagonian Kitt Fox.
204 Blue Fox.	100,000 Mink.	7,000 Argentine Fox.
500 Pitch.	14,400 Wild Cat.	39,000 Wallaby.
1,700 Caracals.	18,000 Beaver.	2,200 Wombat.
500 Leopard and Leopard Cats.	500,000 lbs. Australian Rabbit Skins.	75,000 Nutria.
1,000 Hair Seals.	230,000 Skunk.	50,000 Australian Ringtail Opossum.
300 Mountain Lion.	130,000 Civets.	280,000 Australian Opossum.
5,000 Kolinsky.	12,000 Seal Dyed Mink Rats.	2,700 Persians.
4,000 House Cats.	14,000 Grey Fox.	3,200 Broadtails.
4,300 Ringtail Cats.	1,000 White Fox.	230 Wolverine.
3,700 Japanese Fox.	1,350 White Fox Paws.	100,000 Ermine (including 9000 Grey and
1,000 China Coon.	3,339 Russian Sables.	18,000 Brown).
2,000 Japanese Marten.	449 Japanese Sables.	4,700 Otter.
2,000 Japanese Mink.	2 Sea Otter.	15,000 Lynx Cat.
2,000 Flying Squirrel.	6,300 Lynx.	110,000 Raccoon.
2,000 White Hares.	1,500 Bear.	50,000 lbs. New Zealand Rabbit Skins.
300 China Mink, Sundries, etc.	20 Polar Bear.	250,000 Opossum.
20,000 Squirrels.	1,200 Swift Fox.	13,000 Badger.
1,000 Fisher.	1,000 Cross Fox.	871,000 Musk Rats (including 120,000
100 Chinchilla.	62,000 Red Fox.	Southern and 41,000 Black).

Buyers will be allowed 1, 2, 3, or 4 months from Prompt Day for clearing goods, upon payment of 25 per cent. by or before Prompt Day, with interest on deferred payment at 6 per cent. per annum.

Full information relative to advances, commission, and other details to shippers desirous of consigning skins to these sales by

L. A. SCANDRETT,

Sole Representative in Australia, No. 4 Bridge-street, Sydney

America is the Fur Market of the World, and the best results can be obtained by shipping your consignments to FUNSTEN BROS. AND CO., the Largest Public Fur Auction Sales in the World.

CORRECT ACCOUNTS, FULL WEIGHTS, PROMPT RETURNS, LIBERAL ADVANCES.

Freight bookings to America and transportation arrangements at Sydney from interstate steamers to American steamers will be carried out by me free of charge. Owing to the large consignments sent to FUNSTEN BROS. AND CO. from Australia, better terms for ocean freight can usually be arranged. Our Agents at San Francisco and Vancouver arrange for railway trucks for consignments to St. Louis, so as to obtain the cheaper rate of freight.

Individual Snarers

Probably the two most prominent snarers associated with The Reserve were the markedly different characters, Paddy Hartnett and Herbert (Bert) Nicholls. Their life spans were similar: Paddy was born in 1878, Bert a year later with both dying in the 1940s. In temperament they were opposites: the former loquacious and gregarious, the latter taciturn. Paddy probably had a more comprehensive knowledge of landscape components being a competent self-taught prospector while Bert had a more detailed knowledge of The Reserve. Both had travelled overseas: Bert in the AIF between 1915 and 1917 in New Guinea,¹⁰² while Paddy spent several years on the North Island of New Zealand before returning about 1910. Both snared widely throughout The Reserve in and out of season, alone and with others, built several huts and were renown for tanning skills. Both acted as guides to walking parties: Paddy before Reserve status was granted, Bert afterwards. Both applied for the position of first ranger, Bert's claim being preferred.¹⁰³ Paddy's deeds have been officially recognised in Hartnett Falls, Paddy's Nut and Hartnett Rivulet whereas Bert has been almost forgotten with only Nichol's Junction recalling his activities.

Born near Deloraine to Irish parents, his mother a Youd, Paddy moved to Waratah where he had a variety of manual jobs, such as carting meat, from about age 13 years. Most probably his first links with The Reserve occurred when he and family moved to Liena in 1910.¹⁰⁴ His selection of Du Cane farm and building a hut most probably occurred after a November 1910 trip to St Clair with Ted Clarke.¹⁰⁵ (See

¹⁰²For details of Herbert Nichols who enlisted 14 October 1915 in the 21st Regiment see***8, 35 years 11months, mother Rachel Nichols Devonport, not married labourer 5'8 1/2 12st 4lbs, dark hair blue eyes cof e scarstropical force discharged 1917 Madang E coy Rabaul discharge 10 November 1917

¹⁰³For Hartnett see Hartnett to Emmett, Director of Tourism, 26 November 1928, PWD 22/19-5

¹⁰⁴Valuation Rolls show he selected land at Liena in 1905.

¹⁰⁵Parks and Wildlife claim 1908, an assertion supported by fellow snarer George Bott's recollection that Paddy built track from Howell's to Du Cane that year, G Bott October 1980 & S

Chapter 10 for more details) Extant photos reveal many great whitish-grey ghosts of trees which most probably were burnt by Paddy in clearing his fifty acre farm. From this central site, Paddy worked to all points of the compass, as evidenced by his huts — Campfire Creek, between Kia Ora and Du Cane, a drying shed near the Pinestone outlet from Lake Macfarlane, at least two between Pelion Plains and Pelion Gap, Windy Ridge with McGlades from Queenstown, Lake Marion, and also the Cuvier Valley. In addition Paddy snared around the Upper Mersey on the fringes of the Reserve. Paddy did not shoot rather relying on snaring, trapping and dogging. His snaring career in The Reserve ended in 1926.¹⁰⁶

Paddy's medium height, 5'8' and solid build, about 12 stone, were helpful in all his bushwork, from carrying heavy loads for snaring and guiding, working in west coast mines and scrubbing timber on land at Liena, and rowing. According to his daughter, Mrs Nell Williams, Paddy with encouragement from the McLintons of Launceston and others, and by helping geologists such as Mackintosh Reid, acquired a fundamental knowledge of geology and botany. She also remembered her father collecting specimens and preserving them in formalin before despatching them in kerosene tins to the States.¹⁰⁷ Paddy would tell his children Billy, Nell and Marion St Clair, to examine each stone to uncover its history and which plants were edible. For medical cures, Paddy used many native plants and treatments observed on his New Zealand sojourn and adapted to local conditions.¹⁰⁸ Paddy mixed freely with all levels of society, including wealthy tourists, prominent businessmen and professionals, and both sexes. The rather austere Flo Perrin was captivated by

Cubit & D Murray, *A High Country Heritage*, Launceston, 1988, p. 27, claims that Du Cane was built on 83 acres in 1910

¹⁰⁶D Youd 8 April 1980, Nell Williams 11 August 1980, Bott October 1980, Bill Steers January 1980, L Wooton 27 March 1980. Paddy did however shoot game when he was guiding walking parties

¹⁰⁷Nell Williams 11 August 1980 Between 1918 & 1920 Paddy received 1/- for small marsupials and frogs

¹⁰⁸Nell Williams 11 August 1980.

his charm, and his wife, Mollie was jealous of the time spent in Mrs Perrin's company. Withal, a desire for solitude frequently manifested itself. Like many a bushman past and present, Paddy was fond of a drop and unfortunately many remember him for this rather than his superb bushcraft. If his daughter was correct in claiming that he did not begin drinking till after he won a sculling race on the Pieman River, then Paddy certainly made up for lost time. It has been asserted that he sold the Wolfram Mine in the Upper Forth valley for the proverbial bottle of whiskey. His children hid his beer when he was in his cups, and sold it back the next day. Perhaps the classic story was of Paddy arriving drunk from Sheffield and wanting to return to the town because he 'had to have a drink'. He dressed in his wife's bloomers and blouse, and headed off. Fortuitously, a neighbour, Dan Wylie met Paddy and halted his progress by agreeing to have a convivial bottle of sassy beer. At least Paddy was a peaceful drunk who liked nothing more than a yarn and a dance. Idiosyncratic was the everpresent hardhitter hat and expressions — 'By Jerusalem', 'Irish as pigs' and 'mean as jenny' — instead of swearing. Such characters always have detractors: Andy Wylie believing him to be lazy, a damning criticism when hard-work was almost equated with saintliness.¹⁰⁹

Claims that Paddy was an advocate of a national park are far fetched.¹¹⁰ Paddy loved the landscape and foresaw its tourist potential: Bill Steers believed he had plans to open a shop at Du Cane to cater for visitors. Tourism sustained him until the following snaring season and enabled him to remain in the bush. Similarly, for Paddy natural resources, such as minerals, were there to be developed. He was an optimist believing that Tasmania was so wealthy that there was no cause for worry. If some achieved long term prosperity from their long hours hunting, Paddy did not. Despite his earning big money, such as £600 for 2 months in 1924, by the mid

¹⁰⁹ Andy Wylie personal comment October 1981

¹¹⁰ S Cubit, *Hunters and snarers of the Mersey High Country*, Launceston, 1987, p. 27

1930s the family was in precarious situation. Paddy was deteriorating physically and mentally and his unsuccessful tender to cut and mark the Overland Track can be regarded as an attempt to salvage the family's finances. At times he disappeared, his whereabouts unknown to his family. His last bush forays were at Adamsfield and bush work for HD Reed on the Vale of Rasselas.

Born at Windfalls in the Eastern Tiers, Bert Nicholl's life is unknown till he enlisted in Melbourne in October 1915. He served in New Guinea until discharged in 1917. Bert was in many ways the archetypal taciturn bushman, quiet, with a sense of humour and a teller of tall stories. In commenting on the inferior quality of World War 1 socks, Bert claimed that he 'wore a pair out carrying them in his pocket'. He was similar in build and size to Hartnett. Like Paddy he snared from one end of The Reserve to the other, with more activity around Cradle country compared to Hartnett. He had huts at Nichols Junction after Hartnett, Windy Ridge, between Hartnett Falls and Du Cane and out on Brown Mountain. Bert probably spent more time snaring in the Reserve than any other person, coming and going at regular intervals from his base at Lorinna.¹¹¹ This was recognised by the SPB appointing him to cut the overland track. He normally snared alone, although having at least a season with Lance Tuson from Mole Creek and Hartnett.¹¹² This tendency to go alone resulted in myths arising about his character. Anecdotal or otherwise several sources repeated the story of Bert's response to the inquisitive, 'Dead men tell no tales' to enquiries about his activities¹¹³ He was a skilled tanner, and according to Nell Williams offered a beautifully tanned skin to one of her young girlfriends.

¹¹¹Within a couple of months of discharge, he was with his brother Dick near Wilmot, and then snared The Cradle area for nearly twenty years

¹¹²Bott October 1980

¹¹³Andy Wylie October 1981

He was associated with many key events in The Reserve's development. He was involved in the search for Hanson in 1905,¹¹⁴ guided the first walking parties in both directions along the Overland Track he marked, was present at Weindorfer's funeral, and continued the tradition of hunter-tourist guide operator during the 1930s.¹¹⁵

When Arthur Youd first visited the Reserve in February 1914 he was already an experienced snarer, having over the previous decade gradually worked his way westward across the Plateau from the Great Lake. He recalled leading three packhorses with provisions, including a half dozen bottles of whiskey, along a flour trail to his cousin Paddy Hartnett's camp at Du Cane. Within a day Arthur had disappeared westwards to the Canning Gorge area to visit prospecting mate Oscar Smith. Arthur helped cut grass on his selection and explored much of the surrounding land. At season's end, 150 dozen skins were packed to Howell's Plains and then to Mole Creek. Most of Arthur's long career was spent on the fringes of The Reserve, especially the Upper Mersey at Mayfield, The Paddocks-Walls of Jerusalem area.¹¹⁶

Bill Steers was another of the next generation to work with Paddy. Like many others Bill's life embodied most aspects of rural life. He came from Claude Road near Sheffield, and was related to another prominent snaring family, the McCoys. In the early 1920s with Paddy and old Tom McCoy, Bill snared from the Cuvier Valley to the Canning Gorge and around Mts Ossa and Pelion West. Later he spent a season on Mayfield with Len Aylett and Tom McCoy. However, he is normally associated with Lake Ayr and the February Plains in the forties and early 1950s with

¹¹⁴*Weekly Courier* 5 August 1905

¹¹⁵Nell Williams August 1980, Wootton 27 March 1980, Basil Steers March 1990, A Youd & D Reed August 1980, Andy Wylie October 1981

¹¹⁶Don Youd April 1980

the McCoy's and his son Basil. Bill remembered that when snowbound with Paddy in the Cuvier snow lay on his mate's whiskers as the two spent a night under pandani leaves. He also recollected Paddy trying unsuccessfully to kill possums with strychnine, and grabbing a tiger by the tail and throwing it around.¹¹⁷

George Sloane, Lorinna bushman and storeowner, better remembered for Sloane's Bridge across the Forth which provided access to the Barn Bluff mining fields,¹¹⁸ snared between Du Cane and Lake Ayr around 1914. That year he worked with Dave Thomas and Thomas Bott, all related by marriage.¹¹⁹ At times Sloane snared with Tom McCoy, who had a hut on Mayfield with Bill Steers and Paddy, but is normally linked with Lake Ayr. His career lasted from about 1910 until around 1921 when he had shifted to Lake Windemere with 'Cloggie' McCoy.¹²⁰ (When 'Cloggie' fell in the Warragul (Wurragarra) Creek, it was said that he gripped the rocks so tightly that he 'left finger prints on the rock'¹²¹) Although regarded as a competent snarer, Tom's bushcraft skills were less highly valued, with one critic claiming that he would get lost in his own backyard.¹²²

In an era when hard work was usual George Bott, a gentle quietly spoken man from Lorinna, was renowned for his exertions. George spoke of years in an unconventional way with 1919 being 'nineteen and nineteen'. Between 1919 and 1923 George's territory was the Ossa-Frog Flats-Pelion West country. 1923 was a productive year when 600 skins were taken with the assistance of Edgar Horton, George's brother-in-law. That same year the snow lay over 3 feet thick near Thetis and game was killed by the snow. From 1924 George snared for a decade on

¹¹⁷Bill Steers January 1981

¹¹⁸Andy Wylie October 1981

¹¹⁹Bott October 1980

¹²⁰A Youd 12 April 1980

¹²¹Nell Williams August 1980, Roy Davies, 11 October 1980, Bott October 1980

¹²²Basil Steers 7 June 1983; In contrast Cloggie was a fine builder being contracted by Scenery Preservation Board to construct New Pelion hut.

February Plains before a broken leg sustained in a horse fall ended his mountain days. Like other snarers, he noted natural disasters which went unrecorded in official circles. Examples include snow covering the slopes of Ossa for three weeks and a big fire in the early 1930s which burnt from near Pelion West to the Canning River.¹²³

Around Cradle, the Connells, Lionel (Lyle), and sons Gordon and Es snared at times with Dick Nichols, brother of Bert.¹²⁴ Another area centred on the southern February Plains to near Mt Pillinger. Here Len Bonney and Percy Bellchambers, George Clarke from Mole Creek, and Harry Glover and Edgar Horton were prominent.¹²⁵ Less is known of activities south of Du Cane gap. Apart from Hartnett, Nichols and associates, it is not known if other northerners operated from here. Many shepherds may have snared on the south eastern fringes of The Reserve, but details are unknown. One of the few known hunters was Jacky Reid, long time Lake Country shepherd snared from Pine Tier west to St Clair.¹²⁶ The Pearces — Herb, Bob and George, from Clarence River, and from Sid and Jack from Mt Charles — snared east of St Clair around Travellers Rest Lagoon, north of Narcissus and in the Cuvier Valley.¹²⁷ Herb was probably the last Pearce to kill thylacines in the country adjacent to and perhaps even in the Reserve.¹²⁸ A few west coasters operated on the south western fringes around Federation as did the *Tasmanian Winter Camp* group a few years later.

¹²³Georg Bott, personal comment 11 October 1980

¹²⁴Es Connell personal comment April 1990; for details of Lyle Connell see *Advocate* 2 April 1958

¹²⁵G Bott 11 October 1980, the latter after hunting around the back of Mt Oakleigh from 1912, shifted operations to the Pillinger area from 1914 for a dozen years

¹²⁶HD Reed October 1980, Jacky Reid 18 May 1980

¹²⁷F Cooper January 1984, Jack Koerbin 1989 & HD Reed 23 March 1981

¹²⁸E Guiler, *Thylacine, Tragedy of the Tasmanian Tiger*, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 115-6

Conclusion

As a group, the hunter-snarers knew The Reserve intimately. Nearly every topographical feature was known or visited; they experienced its harshest weather and resided there the longest. RA Billington's assertion that US frontiersmen 'were bent on skimming off surface wealth' is applicable for snarers. They contributed to the local and state economy and helped many a family survive hard times and add relative luxuries in prosperous periods. Like stockmen, piners and prospectors, they exploited The Reserve's resources and probably were more financially rewarded than these others. Yet there were signs of a negative future. Under the 1919 Animals and Birds Protection Act sanctuaries were created on Freycinet Peninsula and Schouten Island and, more pertinently, at National Park.¹²⁹ At the latter guardians were appointed, including Ranger Bill Belcher.¹³⁰

Despite all this, they were a relatively unknown group. The relationship between bushwalkers and snarers and their legacy has been fraught with misunderstanding. Up to the declaration of scenic reserves, most walkers depended on snarers as guides through the unknown and use of their huts. In return a few snarers profited from guiding. In time general abhorrence for their craft developed, and this demonising continues today amongst the more 'deep green' walkers. Criticism, verging on diatribe, by scientists such as AJ Marshall are a simplistic and often ahistorical comprehension of the past.¹³¹ In more recent times walkers have contributed to another false version of snarers. Together with the traditional recreationalists and small towns seeking a triumphalist version of the past, they have accorded snarers noble frontiersman status. In this sanitised past snarers lived in quaint bush huts such as 'Windsor Castle' (Du Cane) and were hardy bushmen.

¹²⁹For Freycinet see *TG* 22 June 1920 & 13 July 1920 for National Park

¹³⁰For guardians see *TG* 13 July 1920

¹³¹AJ Marshall, 'On the disadvantages of wearing fur', pp. 9-42 in AJ Marshall (ed) *The Great extermination: a guide to Anglo-Australian Cupidity Wickedness & Waste*, Melbourne, 1966

Their environmental impact is ignored and generic nomenclature such as 'Snarer's Hut Creek' is bestowed, rather than investigating the past to find that here Hartnett built a hut.

Hunting and snaring had environmental impacts. Immature game and mothers were taken, as the open season of June-July coincided with the period when mothers were carrying their young. Diminished numbers, however, in areas of previous abundance in The Reserve cannot be attributed solely to hunter-snarers.¹³² Evidence from walkers about game numbers is flawed: game are active by night whereas walking is a daytime activity and most walkers rarely depart the beaten track. Market demands were probably more important in determining numbers.¹³³ Not all species suffered with some avian species such as the raptors, and and devils possibly increasing because of greater availability of food, that is more carcasses. Repeated burning-off helped maintain the remnant flora/fauna patterns from Aboriginal times (see Chapter 1)¹³⁴ and attract game. The impact of the end of burning on animal populations is unclear, although the spread of less palatable species such as glychenia and the absence of fresh pick is deleterious. Large numbers of trees, especially King Billy Pines and myrtles, were used to sustain the snarers' lifestyles. Given the slowness of growth at these altitudes, removal of these trees affected the microclimate of small areas and distribution of fauna. Construction of huts involved clearing small areas and thus modifying parts of the ecosystem. Long-term impacts can only be determined by combined historical-biological studies, which alas, are almost as rare in Tasmania as thylacine photos.

¹³²In 1920 Queenstown schoolteacher JR Cottman disagreed laying blame for scarcity of game around St Clair and on the plains to the west on hunters with dogs, *ZDH*, 6 February 1920

¹³³Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, p 428 where he asserted that supply of kangaroos 'has gradually fallen off as the animals have diminished in number'. Furthermore the black possums 'the most elegant and eagerly sought after, have been almost exterminated except in the extreme western districts' whereas ringtail numbers increased because they were not in demand.

¹³⁴In travelling between Narcissus and Du Cane, Hartnett and Clarke 'started a lot of fires that are now doing good work scouring the country', Diary EW Clarke 1910

Figure 34: Environmental Impacts



(a) Paddy Hartnett burning-off near Lake Will



(b) Dead trees from clearing and burning-off around Du Cane Hut

Apart from the Francis-Weindorfer articles, most of the hunters' acquired scientific knowledge has been lost to the universal world of science. Much that is useful in illustrating environmental change such as the location of thylacines has thus disappeared. So too have the hopes and values of individual snarers, a unique lifestyle, and the socio-economic history of small country towns and regions. Hunter-snarers' attitudes to wilderness landscape appreciation help illustrate the point. Bill Steers and Arthur Youd evoked the pragmatic outlook. Steers was too busy to regard any place as beautiful, a sentiment with which Youd concurred in a round about way. 'You snare in all weathers and at times have more skins than you can handle', he said, 'whereas those who spend too much time looking at fire discover that at season's end, the skins are not there.'¹³⁵ Yet economic impulses alone were not the total story. Few snarers would have voiced love of the land, yet some were enthralled, many perhaps attracted, by the potent blend of particular landscape and lifestyle which Basil Steers so eloquently described as a 'mountain addiction'. For younger men there was a sense of achievement in working with and matching the older snarers, and the opportunity of being regarded as a craftsmen by peers. As in so many other circumstances, Hartnett's actions offer an appropriate conclusion: in times of personal depression he would go to Mt Ossa 'the prince of mountains'.¹³⁶

¹³⁵A Youd & D Reed August 1980

¹³⁶Nell Williams 8 November 1980

CHAPTER 8

MINING

a little work should be done on them [the most promising veins] to find if they show any signs of improvement, but none of them as yet give much hope of being valuable. They serve to show that the rock carries metallic minerals, and it is possible that there is a larger lode somewhere in the vicinity. The section is worth further prospecting
Geological Surveyor A Montgomery commenting on the Pelion Copper Field, 1893¹

In forming The Reserve millions of years ago, Nature teased 19th and 20th century prospectors by including traces of coal and many minerals, such as gold, wolfram, copper, and tin, but rarely in commercial quantities. Today there are signs of past activity. There are adits or horizontal tunnels north of Pelion West and at the Lake Will junction on the Overland Track. Around Pelion Hut, and Lakes Ellen and McRae are mullock heaps, trenches, shafts and adits. At the old Barn Bluff site a fireplace and camp oven lid lie next to trenches and open cuts. A greater variety of sites and relics off the beaten track reveal a palimpsest from earlier times. The absence or relative youth of trees, particularly King Billy pines in the Lake Will to Lake Curran area, largely, but not entirely removed, by mining operations is noticeable. In 1922 these affects would have been more apparent with some mines operating and landscape impacts palpable.

This chapter deals with the search for minerals and factors associated with northern and central development such as early finds, government geologists' reports and access. (See also Chapters 4 and 5) Some general observations on phases and

¹A Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and the Mount Dundas Silver Field, and on the discovery of coal at Barn Bluff' in Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1892-3, *TPP*, 1893, No. 50, p. 4

nature of mining are offered. Aspects of coal and copper mines such as major fields, individuals and companies and reasons for failure are provided before conclusions, including the environmental impact, are drawn.

Early explorers and surveyors were expected to gather information about 'Geology and the Natural History of the Country'.² Lack of time and inclination, however, meant that pastoral prospects monopolised attention till the 1850s. Then, with increased access to The Reserve arising from attempts to find ways to the west, surveyors and prospectors searched for minerals. Coal was likely to be the first noticed because of its surface visibility and easy identification whereas gold might 'exist for ages without discovery'.³ Even so mistakes could occur. In 1891 Alan Stewart observed a black substance near Mount Pelion 'supposed to contain manganese' but which was probably coal.⁴ Nearly forty years earlier GW Burgess detected coal on Coal Hill north west of Lake Petrarch,⁵ but as colonial aspirations were golden there was no follow up. Seven years later WA Tully found samples of gold, which required a microscope, further west. If his belief that 'long cherished hopes' for the Frenchman's Cap area reduced exploration,⁶ then the cases of the Mt Arrowsmith Gold Exploring Expedition, 1863, (Chapter 3) and the Lake St Clair Mining Association, 1881, (Chapter 4) should have signalled extreme caution. Then

²Hay to Arthur, 20 May 1826, *HRA* 3, V, p. 234

³WA Tully, "Report of the Expedition in Search of Gold in the Neighbourhood of Frenchman's Cap" in *HTG* 17 May 1851. In the mid-1890s Deloraine merchant Richard Fumage noted that the seams, visible for three to four miles across mountain ranges, were 'practically inexhaustable' 'Lands and Survey Department: report for 1897-98', *TPP*, 1898, No. 56, p. 26 & for market, 'Great Midland and West Coast Railway, 1897: Report of Select Committee', *TPP*, 1897, No. 75, p. 9 & Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, 1897: Report of Select Committee', *TPP*, 1897, No 74, p. 9

⁴'Report of the Mole Creek to Mt Zeehan Railway Survey: Report of the Surveyor in Charge Mr Allan Stewart', *TPP* [LC], 1891, No. 140, 1891, p. 5

⁵For Counsel see 'Mr Surveyor Counsel's Report on the Track from Lake St Clair to the Pieman River', *TPP*, [H of A], 1878, No. 47, p. 3

⁶*HTG* 17 May 1859

prospector WR Bell's timely reminder that quartz, particularly that around Lake Dixon, was not auriferous rang the death knell.⁷ At irregular intervals some hopefuls still sought non-auriferous fortune in the Southern Reserve. Ironically, coal regained prominence following finds in 1897 and 1898,⁸ but quickly faded with revelations that Ewart's samples were poor coking coal because of high ash content.⁹ Nevertheless, prospectors Hartnett and Clarke in 1910 prospected in a desultory fashion (See Chapter 10).

Prospecting was more systematic and consistent in the central and Northern Reserve, mainly because western routes traversed the area. It became a matter of time before promising country was located. Philosopher Smith's forays after 1859 as far south as Cradle Valley with finds of gold and silver and Shepherd and Weeks discovering galena at Mt Claude in 1878 contributed to much subsequent activity.¹⁰ Haygarth has described how various shows in the Wilmot-Middlesex area, and in the east near Gad's Hill reinforced the region's apparent potential through the 1880s and 1890s.¹¹ 'Boosters' such as government mining geologist Thureau and reports of alluvial gold in creeks originating near Cradle Mt maintained outside interest.¹²

⁷*Examiner* 29 April 1881

⁸CA Bacon & MR Banks, 'A History of the discovery, study and exploitation of coal in Tasmania', *PPRST*, Vol 123, 1989, pp. 137-189 at p. 183 for TH Turner and SL Moore at Mt Byron in 1897 & *Examiner* 21 March 1898 for noted Rosebery miner Tom Macdonald's 'rediscovery' near Coal Hill in 1898. Interestingly Mines Secretary Wallace knew of no reward claims for coal in the Cuvier Valley although coal seams had been detected under Coal Hill forty years earlier. 'The Great Western Railway & Electric Power Bill, 1907', *TPP*, 1907, No. 20, p. 19

⁹*ZDH* 20 June 1901. EC Wright's forfeiture of leases at Coal Hill in 1900 807-93M & 808-93m for Non-compliance 1900 Mining Act Sect 39, Labor covenants, see 'Mining Lessees', *TPP*, 1901, No. 73, p. 20

¹⁰'*Report of the Secretary of Mines, 1884*', *TPP*, 1884, No. 70 & tin and bismuth at Iris River *Tasmanian Mail* 22 July 1893

¹¹N Haygarth, *A View to Cradle: a history of Tasmania's Forth River high country*, Canberra, 1988, pp. 54-67. Also stimulating interest was the Round Hill Mine, 1881; 1887/88 James Aylett, Caledonian Mine 5 Mile Rise; 1892 Shepherd & Murphy bismuth, wolfram & tin at Moina. For the 1881 search around Gads Hill, *Tasmanian Mail* 25 September 1881 & reports of

A series of discoveries from 1891 to 1893 between Pelion Plains and Barn Bluff by individuals and groups stimulated mining interest in the northern Reserve itself. Aug Johnson and William Aylett junr, Richard How, Henry Rockliffe and the Mole Creek and Zeehan Mineral Prospecting Association, (MCZMPA) took up leases on Pelion Plains in 1891 in search of silver.¹³ Joseph Will of the Mole Creek and Zeehan Mineral Prospecting Association, (MCZMPA), observed traces of copper near Lake Windemere and Andrews and Jim Swallow discovered a lode east of Lake Swallow in 1893.¹⁴ There is dispute over discovery of coal at Barn Bluff with Will, and W Hart, businessman and parliamentarian, and F Holmes the candidates.¹⁵ Regardless of the outcome, all finds marked the central Reserve as a potential mineral area.

Reid claims that despite the discoveries by How, Andrews and Parsons there was no attempt at development.¹⁶ This ignores How's endeavours to persuade others, notably Philosopher Smith, to investigate further. Whereas Will's, and thus the MCZMPA's, finds entered the public domain, How avoided publicity. However, rumour flourishes, and Mole Creek residents and fellow Reserve hopefuls may have

alluvial gold in creeks coming from Cradle, 'Department of Mines Annual Report 1888-89', *TPP*, 1889, No. 47, p. 12

¹²Report by Mr Thureau on Middlesex Goldfields', *TPP*, 1889, No. 125 & "Report of the Mines Department for 1887-88", *TPP*, 1888, No. 47, p. 12. For details of Thureau see G Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry, 1880-1914', PhD (History) University of Tasmania, 2002, pp. 59-70

¹³Also prominent in the early 1890s were Henry Andrews and Philip Parsons

¹⁴A. McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, 1919, Mines Department Geological Survey Bulletin No 30 p. 5; Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, p. 71 has Andrews discovering silver in the Douglas in April-May 1891

¹⁵Will made his discovery in 1892 but McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 79 regarded Hart and Homes as the first citing their 320 acre reward claims as evidence. As the pair were one time Chairman of Directors and Director of the MCZMPA, perhaps the conundrum is resolved; for biographical details see J Reynolds, 'William Hart', *ADB* Vol 4, p. 356; Reid p. 5 has Will's coal discoveries as 1893 whereas the *Examiner*, 1 March 1892 clearly support the earlier date; *Tasmanian Mail* 5 November 1892 mentions Surveyor Chalmers surveying a 640 acre reward claim.

¹⁶McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 5

gleaned clues from his activities. Excited by his potential prospects of 'some very nice prospects of tin ... [although unable to] find their deposit', How wanted Smith to visit alone. He claimed that there were 'miles of mineral Country that is nearly worth seeing'¹⁷ and if inspection 'meets your approbation' there was an a quarter share offer for both silver and tin shows.¹⁸ How appealed to Smith's pride by claiming that 'Will anticipates another Bischoff in that quarter.'¹⁹ Inclement weather, an injured knee and misunderstood communications thwarted Smith's proposed visit to the Pelion area in early 1893. Smith nonetheless commented on tin samples sent for examination and offered relevant advice should How visit Forth.²⁰ Apparently the matter ended here as no further correspondence survived.

Coal, not copper, stimulated activity with the MCZMPA believing rewards would accrue from investigating coal deposits.²¹ Encouragement came with Government geologist A Montgomery's report that 'there was every inducement to continue prospecting, [in the Pelion-Barn Bluff area] and great hope of making very valuable discoveries by doing so'.²² Despite Stewart's track improving access, Montgomery believed that isolation limited development. Prospects of railways to the western fields, and the belief that Reserve fields could meet demands for coal for smelting and domestic heating were additional catalysts.²³ Although intimating the possibility of gold and tin along the Mersey and Forth valleys and tin near Granite

¹⁷NS 234/3/21 How to Smith 24 January 1893

¹⁸NS 234/3/21 How to Smith 21 March 1893

¹⁹NS 234/3/21 How to Smith 12 April 1893

²⁰For details about tin samples see NS 234/3/21 How to Smith 19 April and 1 July 1893 & for Smith's response see NS 234/2/17 letters sent by Smith to R How in 1893, pp. 245, 265, 301, 306, 307, 319, 320, 364 & 417

²¹For meeting of the Exploration Company see *Examiner* 1 March 1892

²²ZDH 21 April 1893

²³Demand for coal see ZDH 20 June 1901 & evidence from Hinman 'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill', p. 12

Tor, Montgomery acknowledged that with glaciation removing alluvial deposits, the time-consuming task of discovering actual lodes was necessary.²⁴

Construction of the Innes Track sparked another burst of activity with Acting Secretary of Mines WH Wallace revealing that fifteen sections or 2100 acres were selected.²⁵ In 1901 Ewart corroborated the link between improved access and mining activity noting work on exposed coal seams.²⁶ Assistant Government Geologist George Waller's report on the Barn Bluff field the same year fuelled interest as did Beattie's accounts and photographs.

As with earlier phases, resurgence depended upon improved access — the extension of the Lorinna Road to the Upper Forth Valley and the Razorback track from Sloane's Bridge to Barn Bluff fields — and discovery of wolfram and cassiterite from 1916 in the Upper Forth valley.²⁷ Three years elapsed however, before Macintosh Reid inspected the area. Again there was a favourable report. Nature had smiled on the Reserve endowing the area with favourable topography. Exposed wolfram veins in quartz rocks along hillsides reduced potential costs by permitting tunnelling while on the plateau shafts gave access to copper and lead. Glaciation had exposed Permocarboniferous conglomerate and sandstones containing coal

²⁴Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', pp. 2 & 3; further inducements were progress on Bell Mount and Middlesex fields to the north indirectly encouraged prospectors and investors; A Montgomery, 'Report on the Mineral Discoveries in the neighbourhood of Bell Mount' in Report of the Secretary for Mines, 1893-94, *TPP*, 1894, No. 63 & J Harcourt Smith, 'Report on the Bell Mount and Middlesex Mineral Fields', in Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1898-99, *TPP*, 1899, No. 69

²⁵'Great Midland and West Coast Railway', pp. 40-1

²⁶R Ewart, 'Report on Track Mt Pelion towards Gormanston, via Eldon Bluff', in 'Annual Report of the Department of Lands and Surveys, 1901-1902', *TPP*, 1902, No. 42, p. 37

²⁷PWD 24/3 Deloraine Municipality deals with track and road working

seams.²⁸ Topography favoured water power in mining and treatment of ores. The Forth's easterly flowing tributaries could be easily impounded while river falls into the Forth provided optimal conditions for power generation. An enthused Reid thought there was sufficient potential power for all mines for years.²⁹ Then as a wolfram revival petered out, shale oil became the big hope. With better access to the Middlesex fields, upgrading an old stock track from Barn Bluff to Cradle Valley was seen as the logical transport link.

Before examining developments of the two major fields, Pelion and Barn Bluff, some general observations are apposite. Isolation and remoteness necessitated reliable access. Horses, led by experienced packers such as Parsons and William Aylett, transported in all supplies and mining machinery and carted ore out. Rail was the preferred option because of size and weight of machinery and quantities of ore for Tasmanian or mainland smelters. As discussed in Chapter 4, there were two major options in the 1890s — Innes' elevated, exposed and boggy track across the February Plains or Stewart's longer low level route up the Mersey Valley.³⁰ New approaches often represented a mixture of the absurd and the sensible. Montgomery, who knew 'very little of this country personally', illustrated the former by proposing a tunnel from Fury Gorge to the Forth Valley then a normal railway to the Sheffield district.³¹ In 1900 Waller suggested an alternative along the Forth valley and a zigzag ascent to the Barn Bluff country via Commonwealth or Swallow

²⁸McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 12-13; ZDH 30 October 1919 for a summary of his report

²⁹McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 12-3

³⁰For various descriptions see G Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of Bell Mount, Dove River, Five-Mile Rise, Mount Pelion, and Barn Bluff' in *TPP*, 1901, No. 4, pp. 66-7; Beattie, 'Notes on a Trip to the Barn Bluff Country', *PPRST*, 1901, pp. xxxii-xxxiii

³¹Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 3

Creeks.³² The Barn Bluff Company contributed to the Commonwealth Creek track which started from Sloane's bridge 15 miles south of Lorinna. However, the steepness, a 1:3 or 1:5 gradient, 1750 feet up the Razorback Hill to the mines, was a deterrent.³³ In April 1916 Hartnett constructed a track to Pelion Plains which zigzagged around Mt Oakleigh.³⁴ The Pelion Company and the government funded improvement of the track to cart status.³⁵ Thus Sheffield supplanted Chudleigh as main supplier of the mines. Mt Farrell was a potential rival for supplying provisions to the Barn Bluff mines, but the intervening section of the Innes track was rugged and exposed. Road work proceeded on a cost sharing arrangement between government, local council, individual settlers such as JF Cox, and mining companies. At times disputes arose over apportioning costs, especially when in-kind costs were considered expenditure. Melbourne manager of Mt Pelion Mines, J McKinley Wilson rarely was conciliatory, instead mixing condescension and threats of withdrawal, as did J Moate of Adelaide Oil Company.³⁶ For over a decade from about 1910, H Blyth MHA, acted as unofficial agent for mining companies pleading their cause before Lands and Mines Department officials. He had reasonable success because development of such resources dovetailed with contemporary aspirations.³⁷

³²Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 71

³³WH Twelvetees, *The Middlesex and Mount Claude Mining Field*, Geological Survey Bulletin No 14, Hobart, 1913, p. 2 & PWD 24/3 Deloraine CP Smith to Engineer-in-Chief Fincham 10 August 1911

³⁴McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 5 & 7; also 'Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1902-03' *TPP*, 1903, No. 17, p. xxxii

³⁵*Weekly Courier* 14 December 1918 & 8 February 1920

³⁶See PWD 24/7 Kentish Municipality, File 'From Gregson's via Barn Bluff to Pelion Plateau'

³⁷This section on cost sharing is a summation of a voluminous file on the Deloraine municipality in PWD 24/3; for access via Middlesex see PWD 24/7 Kentish Municipality

From the late 1880s prospectors — alone, in small groups, or as representatives of prospecting associations — combed the area.³⁸ For instance the peripatetic Aylett in January 1901 met the famed G Renison Bell at Pelion mines, prospected a galena lode in the Canning River valley, examined Ossa and Pelion West coal seams and met other prospectors at Barn Bluff mines.³⁹ In some cases financiers or speculators 'grubstaked' prospectors as was the case with EC James and Phil Parsons' gold lease on Middlesex Plains.⁴⁰ Most early discoveries arose when prospectors noted similarities between geological structures in the Reserve and those associated with previous mining ventures. Sometimes 'floaters', fragments of main beds, indicated metals or, as with Will, coal at Barn Bluff. If rocks were concealed by scrub or detritus, prospectors sought outcrops on ridges and sides of vallies. If impressed, prospectors, associations or companies registered claims.

It was a small man's frontier, with outlay minimal. Equipment often comprised only a pick, panning dish and tomahawk or half-axe. By issuing relatively inexpensive prospector's licences, governments made mining 'a lottery open to all' not just the wealthy.⁴¹ The 1917 Mining Act illustrates this point: a prospector's licence, 10/-, authorised possession of 20 acres for gold, 100 acres for coal and 40 acres for any other mineral. With success there was the possibility of a reward claim, 20 to 240 acres rent free.⁴²

³⁸For an example of a prospecting association see Zeehan, Waratah, and Mole Creek Prospecting Association see *Examiner* 31 July 1891

³⁹*Examiner* 18 January 1901

⁴⁰HG 1098 6 October 1903 for Parsons/James

⁴¹D Garden, 'Catalyst or Cataclysm? gold mining and the environment', *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol 72 (1 & 2), September 2001, pp. 28-44 at p. 30

⁴²*Walchs Tasmanian Almanack*, Hobart, 1921, p. 142. G Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry, 1880-1914', PhD (History) University of Tasmania, 2002, surprisingly does not discuss reward claims and confines discussion on licences to miner's rights, pp 140-1

The main aim of exploratory work was to determine the extent and area of the deposit, average thickness, depth and direction of seams or lodes and, less precisely, the probable quantity and value.⁴³ The best approach was to adopt economical yet thorough methods. Surface exploration, the cheapest option, involved clearing scrub, digging trenches, pits and opening bench faces. Wise individuals restricted the number of expensive adits or cross tunnels into hillsides. The geologically literate knew that oxidation altered surface veins and that valuable minerals could be leached out. They also knew that sometimes the value of deposits increased with depth. At either this or the previous phase, they sent samples for inspection or assays. About this stage control slipped from prospector-miners to local financiers and if circumstances warranted, mainland or overseas capital. More rarely, and under specific conditions, government offered limited financial assistance.⁴⁴

If sober assessment or persuasive prospectuses indicated commercial development, companies raised additional finance to introduce machinery onto leases. For instance pipe lines were dug to convey water via flumes to Pelton wheels.⁴⁵ Despite the introduction of machines, manual labour was still essential to operations. Company directors and sometimes 'friendly' experts visited to observe operations and assess progress.⁴⁶ Often judgments were neither prudent nor sober as subsequent events revealed.

⁴³*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 18, pp. 528-9 11th edit, Cambridge, 1911. Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry', does not deal directly with this aspect of mining

⁴⁴'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1912', *TPP*, 1913, No. 6, p. 7 for Mining Development Act 1912

⁴⁵For an example of machinery see Mt Pelion Company 10 January 1919 'Work done' PWD 24/3

⁴⁶For Melbourne directors visit to the Wolfram Mine see *Weekly Courier* 25 September 1919

Chicanery and duplicity were always possible. The anecdotal account of Paddy Hartnett selling the wolfram mine while in his cups illustrates the assertion that prospectors sometimes sold or were tricked out of their claim by the unscrupulous.⁴⁷ Whitham's comments in *Western Tasmania*, about the Lake Dora field are apposite for this extreme situation. The mines, he pronounced, 'were never more than prospecting holes, and some went no further than prospecting the pockets of the shareholders'.⁴⁸ Companies were floated or associations formed with the option dependent upon assessment of future prospects and/or degrees of hyperbole. EC James was a master of the latter as illustrated by promotional prose for his various schemes. The Government Gazette provides rich details of shareholdings in consequent companies.

Kangaroo and wallaby supplemented tinned goods and staples such as flour, bacon, tea and sugar packed in by horse. By 1919 however, McIntosh Reid noted diminished game numbers around mines.⁴⁹ On rarer occasions wattle birds and wild duck were an addition to the larder. Miners' clothing was similar to shepherds, piners and hunters, although bluey jackets were more often used. Tents, dubious shelter at these altitudes, were often used instead of huts.⁵⁰ A variant was the 'firefly', a sheet of treated canvas, 6' by 8', hung over the fire so that men could warm themselves and cook in relative comfort.⁵¹ Mining companies constructed some huts, such as the Pelion Mining Company's at the Wolfram Mine and Pelion,⁵² and

⁴⁷ Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, p. 104

⁴⁸ C. Whitham, *Western Tasmania: a land of riches and beauty*, Queenstown, 1924, p. 115

⁴⁹ McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 21

⁵⁰ G Bott personal comment 11 October 1980

⁵¹ Bott October 1900 noted tents at Barn Bluff

⁵² On Old Pelion hut is written 'EMHLangana' L Wootton personal comment 27 March 1980 & K Burns, 'Preliminary survey, Pelion Copper Mines', Tasmanian Mines Technical Report No 3, Hobart, 1958, pp. 34-36 cites EMHLangana as Zulu for meeting or joining

Figure 36: Mining Huts



(a) At Old Pelion



(b) Lake Windemere Hut in 1940

that at Lake Windemere. These huts acted as rendezvous for prospectors, miners and visitors, especially walkers.⁵³

Mining, like other contemporary manual labour, was arduous. Altitude and isolation added to the toll. A letter from Andrew Curran, working at Barn Bluff, to his father, a Hobart auctioneer, illustrates potential weather extremes. Following an overnight fall of two feet of snow in early May 1901, workmen's tents nearly collapsed when low temperatures and further snowfalls continued. Experienced western miner CP Smith's attempt to deliver mail was aborted when his horse balked at thicker snow on the high ground. A man more dead than alive averted an almost certain tragedy by staggering into camp and imploring the men to rescue his mate. While other workmen revived him with brandy, Matchin and Curran found the mate about a mile away, although 'It was no beer and skittles making our way over the track.' Somehow they carried him 'like a log of wood' back to the safety of an overcrowded camp, 12 men in three tents, where they were 'as thick as girls around a troopship'.⁵⁴

It transpired that the pair had departed Mt Farrell for Cradle Mt. They camped under tentfly at Mt Inglis, but wet matches prevented them lighting a fire. After a dawn departure through waist high snow, they experienced sleepiness associated with hypothermia. After five miles one weakened, but his mate carried him another mile before realising that to continue would mean two deaths not one. He crawled to the camp, hands and feet showing frostbite. Curran asserted that the man deserved a Victoria Cross because his first words were for his mate. Their packhorses were left

⁵³While weatherbound at the Smith-Cook huts near Commonwealth Creek, Aylett and Walter Sheen (Sheehan?) met west coasters C Madden and O'Keefe For Aylett *Examiner* 18 January 1901 & for Weindorfer's visits see NS 234/19/1 Weindorfer to R Smith 29 March 1920

⁵⁴All information is obtained from *Examiner* 20 May 1901

to die at Mt Inglis, while the dog lasted one more day. Both men were familiar with the country and had searched unsuccessfully for Rosebery publican, TJ Connelly, in 1901.⁵⁵

It is difficult to categorise the backgrounds of the prospectors. Many from the Mole Creek-Sheffield district were 'jack of all trades' who in some cases developed proficiency in at least one bush skill such as hunting/snaring, prospecting, packing and forestry work. Some were self-taught, melding personal knowledge and observations with readings from contemporary papers. At various mining camps or as packers-guides to geologists, a fortunate few extended their mining education. In contrast, West Coasters were more likely to possess a greater practical mining knowledge. Macintosh Reid's tribute to Hartnett's 'skill, energy and knowledge of the district' exemplifies the reliance on local lore.⁵⁶ Beattie's encomium of Harry Andrews, always 'badgering about' in the Pelion country, was more fulsome: 'He knows every 'hole and corner' of it, and keeps a nice assortment of mineral shows 'up his sleeve' for the convenience of any speculative traveller who may come along.'⁵⁷ Professional/amateur interaction was essential in the absence of detailed field maps for rugged and remote country.

⁵⁵*Examiner* 20 May 1901. Connelly's swag, camp tucker and two bottles of whisky, was found near Swallow's camp, Lake Windemere, but his corpse was later located a short distance from the Innes Track near the southern end of the February Plains. For examples of the search see *Examiner* 4 & 16 April 1901; Basil Steers showed me the location in early 1982

⁵⁶McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 2, also thanked George Sloane, Sid Reardon, George Day, CP Smith, J C McMichael, and Harry Andrews. Similarly Twelvetrees in *The Middlesex and Mount Claude Mining Field*, p. 4 has a similar list including G Sloane & Reardon; Whitham, *Western Tasmania*, p. 120 describes Hartnett as 'one of the most assiduous prospectors on this field'

⁵⁷Beattie, *PPRST*, 1900-01, p. xxx

Coal Mines

There were two distinct types of coal, known colloquially as cannel and semi-cannel coal, a term which has 'no scientific significance'. Instead, Loftus Hills proposed the term 'kerogenite' as used in the Scottish oil shale industry because distillation produced oils.⁵⁸ Will found pelionite, so named by scientist William F Petterd, because it contained more tar than oil,⁵⁹ on Barn Bluff's south-eastern spur, whereas it was absent at Pelion West and Doris-Ossa.⁶⁰ Unscientific terms persisted causing some confusion to contemporaries and future historians. Whatever term is used, the coal originated from Permo-Carboniferous Greta Coal systems.

Coal seams are evident in many parts of the Reserve especially Coal Hill, Du Cane Range, and between Pelion East and Pelion West and around Barn Bluff. The northern mountains consisted of 'columnar greenstone resting on horizontal, undisturbed, marine beds' with coal measures at approximately the same altitude.⁶¹ RM Johnston placed Coal Hill samples, initially discovered by Gould, in the Mesozoic age/era as were those of the Fingal Valley. Using fossil evidence, Montgomery placed Barn Bluff coal with lower measures. At the end of the 19th century there was a belief that The Reserve's coal measures were the fringes of an extensive field extending to the Eldon Range and Mt Sedgwick on the West Coast Range. With initial favorable reports and almost horizontal coal seams whose mining appeared mechanically simple and cheap, expectations were high. How developments unfolded is the subject of this narrative.

⁵⁸Loftus Hills, A Mackintosh Reid & P Nye, *The Coal Resources of Tasmania*, Geological Survey Mineral Resources Bulletin No. 7, Hobart, 1922, p. 13

⁵⁹'Report of Shale Deposits', in Report of the Secretary for Mines 1908, *TPP*, 1909, No. 22, p. 42

⁶⁰Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, p. 237

⁶¹Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 2

(i) Barn Bluff Coal Mines

After finding fossil shells near Barn Bluff in Christmas 1891, Will returned for samples of 'cannel coal or oil shale found in outcrops of scores of tons on the surface'.⁶² Montgomery explained that beds of shale, mudstone, and sandstone containing marine fossils reached the greenstone [dolerite] capping and were on the surface of the south east spur of Barn Bluff. Subsequent glacial action moved the large flakes and surface material from its original bed. As well there was a northern outcrop of 'very rich' bituminous coal' between Barn Bluff and Cradle Mt, near Mt Inglis, and the eastern slopes of Fury Gorge.⁶³ Initial testing revealed that the coal would be useful in the manufacture of oil and paraffin products, and for enriching illuminating gas. The presence of large quantities of pyrites in the seams, however, somewhat dampened hopes. Montgomery proclaimed that the cannel coal was 'one of the very best ... for gas making purposes in the whole world'.⁶⁴ As these results derived from surface samples subject to centuries of deterioration or buried up to eight feet in shallow soil, he was confident of better results 'when the seam is mined from solid country'.⁶⁵ Montgomery's estimate that the 1,800 acre field contained 1.6 million tons of coal undoubtedly pleased the MCZMPA.⁶⁶ Despite the exact nature of the seam being unknown Montgomery recommended further mining. While acknowledging present inaccessibility, he opined that present inaccessibility

⁶²Will returned for samples on the advice of manager Thomas Bateman, self-described mining agent, who was also manager of Clarence Gold Mining Co based at Lefroy. *HG* 31 January 1892. Innes in 1897 gave a similar description: At Barn Bluff the coal was 'about, upon and just under the surface of the ground, the seam having apparently been broken up by some convulsion of nature'. 'Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes upon the Track from Mole Creek to Rosebery, Mount Reid', *TPP*, 1897, No. 43, p. 7

⁶³*Tasmanian Mail* 5 November 1892

⁶⁴Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 7 also believed the cannel coal resembled the Joadja and Hartley shales of New South Wales rather than those of Scotland

⁶⁵Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 7

⁶⁶McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 78 upgraded the figures to 1.7 million tons of pelionite and 2.2 million tons of semi-cannel coal

could be overcome by a railway whose construction posed no difficulties.⁶⁷ That the field was restricted to about four square miles and appeared to thicken southward towards the Eldons and Du Cane ranges, was a positive sign.⁶⁸

Nature — large quantities of water, foggy and wet weather, and steeply dipping terrain — and defective tools hampered Will's exploration. With the collapse of Melbourne money markets, raising finance became difficult, despite the Melbourne Gas Company's favorable assessment.⁶⁹ *Examiner* editor and member of the MCZMPA, Henry Button, described feelings of 'Eureka' when the much sought seam was 'discovered'. Further excavation, however, revealed that the blocks were simply 'floaters' and the seam eluded searchers.⁷⁰ Operations petered out as the Company's interest switched to the potentially more lucrative Lefroy gold fields. Some optimists persisted despite these failures and Sydney Technical College Laboratory's distillation results indicating that the high tar content coal would be expensive to purify. The inability to discover the seam from which 'floaters' originated sounded the death knell for these 'practical' miners.⁷¹

(ii) From Ossa to Pelion West

Montgomery's belief that a 'great [cannel] coal-field' extended under the Eldon and Du Cane Ranges and the Central Plateau apparently became reality when Will

⁶⁷ZDH 21 April 1893

⁶⁸Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 2, a view supported by McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 76

⁶⁹*Daily Telegraph* 30 September 1893; 'Report of the Secretary of Mines for 1892-3', *TPP*, 1893, No. 50, p. 6

⁷⁰H Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam* Launceston, 1993, pp. 309-10 claims it was at Pelion but the description of floater is more appropriate for Barn Bluff

⁷¹'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1908', *TPP*, 1909, No. 22, p. 42

found seams under Pelion East, Mt Ossa, and Pelion West, 1893.⁷² Then came contradictions as Montgomery declared the East Pelion seam to be of poor quality and small despite not having seen it because of a failed rendezvous with Will, and his guide, Richard Howe, not knowing the location.⁷³ The latter assertion is surprising because Howe prospected throughout the Pelion country.⁷⁴ Part of the confusion may have stemmed from some locals calling Ossa Pelion East.⁷⁵

Until 1896-97 there was neither major investigations nor working of the coal measures, although Philosopher Smith, WA McClure, J Elliott and J Wilson visited the Pelion area in 1895. While Smith's diary contains only weather details, subsequent correspondence contained his sage advice about the future of the Barn Bluff and Pelion coal fields. Smith thought it was premature to mine until commercial prices for the coal were known. He indicated that distance and accessibility inhibited commercial development.⁷⁶ In the mid-1890s Launcestonians, Arthur Hinman and SJ Sutton, established a syndicate, based on the Direct Route Association, which leased 600 and 200 acres at Pelion West and Ossa respectively. Harry White, Launceston speculator and syndicate secretary, reflected that the group became interested when the value of the coal deposits became

⁷²Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 2 and for Will's finds see Bacon & Banks, 'A History of the discovery, study and exploitation of coal in Tasmania', pp. 182 & 183; 'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1908', *TPP*, 1909, No. 22, p. 42 refers to a reward claim for coal discovery at Pelion West, p. 9. Noteworthy are conflicting claims of discovery. Usually Will is accorded that status although Bacon and Banks claimed that prospectors Parsons and W Aylett discovered the coal in 1898, Bacon & Banks, 'A History of the discovery, study and exploitation of coal in Tasmania', p. 183

⁷³*ZDH* 21 April 1893 & Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 2

⁷⁴NS 234/3/21 How to James Smith 24 January 1893

⁷⁵Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, p. 12

⁷⁶NS 234/1/19 Smith's diary from 6-15 November & NS 234/2/17 Smith to WA McClure 28 November 1895 & Smith to Wm Gibson 2 January 1896

apparent.⁷⁷ With some members knowing neither the country nor the geology, the syndicate relied heavily on Will and C Russell's somewhat dubious local knowledge. (see Chapter 4) Then mine manager, Yorkshireman Thomas Teesdale discovered seams, 19-22 inches thick whose quality improved with increasing depth because it lost its 'slate or shaley appearance'.⁷⁸ Whether Teesdale's praise that the coal was Tasmania's best was an accurate assessment or a promotional statement is unknown.⁷⁹ Most concurred with Furmage's observation that the seams were visible for three to four miles across mountain ranges, but that they were not 'practically inexhaustable'.⁸⁰ Syndicate members and district surveyor Chalmers believed the Mole Creek railway would allow the mines to supply west coast smelters and households.⁸¹ After claiming the quality was equal to Newcastle coal, Hinman later admitted that the quality and quantity of coal remained unknown.⁸² With no return for its capital, the syndicate, like the earlier MCZMPA, ceased operations.⁸³

In 1901 Waller avowed the seam was uneconomic 'even if the ash contents proved to be satisfactory', but if Pelion or Barn Bluff copper mines developed, coal would become profitable.⁸⁴ He contradicted Innes' assessment of 'valuable steam coal' at Pelion West, asserting that 'unusually high percentage of sulphur would probably

⁷⁷'Great Midland and West Coast Railway, 1897', pp. 17-9

⁷⁸'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, p. 9

⁷⁹'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, p. 12

⁸⁰'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, p. 9

⁸¹'Lands and Survey Department Report for 1897-98', *TPP*, 1898, No. 56, p. 26 & for market, 'Great Midland and West Coast Railway, 1897', p. 9 & 'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill, p. 9

⁸²For Newcastle see 'Tasmanian Central and West Coast Railway Bill', p. 12

⁸³Leases forfeited in 1901 were 1853-93m Mt Pelion Prospecting Assoc 200 acres, 1856-93M 100 acres, 1857-93m 100 acres, 1854-93m 200 acres

⁸⁴Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 67

render the coal useless for economic purposes.⁸⁵ Contemporaneously JW Beattie noted the opposing Launceston reaction, one sample being a 'splendid steaming coal, ... [the other] a splendid coking coal'. He also noted that the Pelion Company used the coal, the 'best quality' in the state, in its forge.⁸⁶ With the exception of Aylett's activities noted earlier in the chapter, there are fewer records of work here than at Mt Ossa. Its brief life indicates relative failure.

Inspired by wolfram discoveries, the Pelion Company took-up leases on the Thetis-Ossa saddle and at Pelion West. Reid's comments noted previous work, and limitations on possible uses because of the composition of the coal.⁸⁷ Again, failure resulted.

Shale Oil and Petroleum

An overall examination of the State's geological resources in 1908 included a study of shale deposits. There were references to difficulties in purification, the inability to discover major seams and a limited prospecting season because of altitude and weather.⁸⁸ In 1915 Melbourne's GD Meudell declared that it 'would be a miracle' if Tasmania did not hold oil because there were traces of nearly all known metals and because with twenty five coal areas oil could 'not be too far away.'⁸⁹ His expectation, based on the fact that Permo-carboniferous beds were potential oil reservoirs, was shared by many. The Mines Department produced scientific studies of potential supplies, while private enterprise searched near Port Davey and

⁸⁵Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 67

⁸⁶*Examiner* 1 June 1901

⁸⁷McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 46 & 80

⁸⁸'Report of Shale Deposits', in Report of the Secretary for Mines 1908, *TPP*, 1909, No. 22, p. 42 & 'Report of the Secretary for Mines, 1909', *TPP*, 1909, No. 19, p. 15

⁸⁹*Weekly Courier* 2 December 1915; for biographical details see D Langmore, 'G Meudell', *ADB* Vol. 10, pp. 490-1

Latrobe.⁹⁰ The Department's doubts about possible success stemmed partly from a belief that many were pre-occupied with the geological structure rather than ascertaining surface evidence.⁹¹ Yet in 1921 Mines Minister Sir Elliott Lewis spoke of great possibilities in development of shale oil distillation.⁹²

The Barn Bluff field shared in the post war resurgence of petroleum searching, despite unfavourable assessments by Government Geologist Loftus Hills. To the fore were companies registered on the mainland, with local managers. The South Australian based Adelaide Oil Exploration Company⁹³ and Melbourne registered Tasman Oil and Products Company,⁹⁴ which commenced operations in 1922, conformed to the pattern. Hills had doubts about the former company even though it had drilled to about 800 feet in exploratory work⁹⁵ — he claimed that there was no geological evidence for the existence of liquid oil in the Barn Bluff-Pelion coalfields.⁹⁶ The Company unsuccessfully sought exclusive rights for a five year search for oil. They argued that millions of tons of oil was scattered on the ground in the 'form of carbonised asphaltum — that is inspissated asphalt'.⁹⁷ Hills was seathing about Tasman Oil despite prior exploration licences covering about 20,000 acres.⁹⁸ He castigated the company for a 'Total absence of method, efficiency, and

⁹⁰'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1917', *TPP*, 1918-19, No. 10, pp. 30-1; 'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1918', *TPP*, 1919-20, No. 10, pp 35-8 & 'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1915', *TPP*, 1916-17, No. 14, pp. 30-1; for an example of the Bruny Island petroleum Company see *Weekly Courier* 18 January 1917

⁹¹'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1919-20', *TPP*, 1919-20, No. 10, pp. 36-7

⁹²Mines Department, Minister's Annual Statement 20 October 1921

⁹³*TG* 20 December 1921: the company was registered in 1921, managed locally by John Thomas Moate of Devonport

⁹⁴*TG* 9 May 1922 legal manager Alfred George Omant and AG Black as mine manager

⁹⁵Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, p. 240 & 'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1922', *TPP*, 1923-4, No. 4, p. 13

⁹⁶'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1921', *TPP*, 1921-2, No. 5, p. 10

⁹⁷*TPP*, [H of A] 16 December 1921 & *Daily Telegraph* 10 October 1921.

⁹⁸Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, p. 238. Exploration licences, 398a while P Evans, A Nicholls, GS Hope, Black and Manton and WA Neudie all received a licence for 3,200 acres

sincerity on the part of those in charge of the operations on the spot'.⁹⁹ Instead of systematic trenching or boring for the coal horizon, management opted for open cuts to extract pelionite fragments. Hills believed the humic-kerogenite coal outcrops were rich in gas and oil, but high in sulphur content. He found it impossible to ascertain quantity, but nevertheless estimated a reserve of 1.6 million tons.¹⁰⁰ Not unexpectedly, AG Black, manager of Tasman Oil, was more upbeat about his company's prospects.¹⁰¹

There was an even more negative tale with the Great Pelionite Petroleum Company. Of its three exploration leases, Hills indicated that only RJ McCutcheon's was worth examining but that, by late 1919, work had not commenced.¹⁰²

Copper

Phases of discovery of promising veins, selection of leases, and then dashing of hopes when work revealed lack of commercial quantities — can be discerned in copper operations on the Pelion Plains. Work by How and the MCZMPA followed this pattern with the MCZMPA finding the 'large admixture of blende and arsenical pyrites rendered the copper pyrites valueless'.¹⁰³ Montgomery damned with faint praise: mineral veins were present and thus 'worth prospecting, ... [but] none of them are very promising.' ¹⁰⁴ After advice from Robert Sticht of Mt Lyell fame, John Field and Furnage uncovered several lodes at shallow depths but

⁹⁹Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, p. 238

¹⁰⁰Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, p. 238. Weindorfer records rumour of a road from Barn Bluff north via Cradle Valley to the Middlesex fields, NS 234/19/2 Weindorfer to R Smith 10 March 1922

¹⁰¹*Weekly Courier* 19 May 1921

¹⁰²Hills, *The Coal resources of Tasmania*, pp. 238-9; RJ McCutcheon, CB McCutcheon and J Forster, all entitled to search 3,200 acres

¹⁰³Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 68

¹⁰⁴Montgomery, 'Report on the Country between Mole Creek and ...', p. 4

abandoned work when the copper content failed to improve.¹⁰⁵ In the months following Philosopher Smith's visit, copper was discovered on How's reward claim. The *Zeehan and Dundas Times* reported that prospects were sufficiently promising to warrant further expenditure. News that a representative of English capital had inspected the area resulted in further sections being pegged.¹⁰⁶

In 1897 Innes asserted that the area 'gives indication of being a valuable mineral field' with Mount Pelion Consolidated Copper Mining Company investigating a pyrites lode containing gold, silver and copper.¹⁰⁷ Furnage, of the Launceston company, told the Select Committee into the Great Western Railway of promising finds with 'first class' ore consisting of copper with traces of gold and silver. He avowed that a railway was essential; otherwise ore would have to be smelted on site as pack horses could not cope with the quantities mined. Leases held by individuals and the Pelion Company, were forfeited in 1898 and 1901.¹⁰⁸ Waller's 1901 report commented on the failure. Previously worked adits on the Douglas creek were now filled with water, while the ore consisted of iron pyrites, zinc blende and haematite with only small quantities of copper pyrites. Despite this, and recognition that further testing would involve the sinking of tunnels, Waller concluded that overall the country was favourable.¹⁰⁹ Beattie attributed the Company's failure, despite

¹⁰⁵McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 58

¹⁰⁶ZDH 27 November 1896

¹⁰⁷'Route to the West Coast: Report of Mr Surveyor Innes upon the Track from Mole Creek to Rosebery', p. 10; the Mount Pelion Consolidated Copper Mining Company, was formed and took up 600 acres in 1896. It comprised manager Leslie Jolly, with 9,500 of the 10,000 shares, £1 each, with Launcestonians - merchant Lindsay Tulloch, W Fordyce warehouseman, and sharebroker JC Macmichael, RP Furnage Deloraine investor, and JW Cheek Evandale investor each owning 100 shares. HG 19 October 1897 & 9 November 1897

¹⁰⁸HG 25 October 1898; similarly McGowan and Andrews sections were 'promising'. Furnage and Hinman selected leases, 320 and 200 acres respectively in early 1898 but by late October that year had forfeited the same. Company operations apparently ceased before 1901 when four leases comprising 600 acres were forfeited 'TPP, 1901, No. 73, p. 18

¹⁰⁹Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', pp. 67-8

spending £1,200, to the mine's 'utter isolation'; several tons of bagged ore awaited the recommencement of operations.¹¹⁰ After selecting land in the Forth Valley south of Lorinna, FAW Gisborne, teacher, orchardist, mine manager and acute observer, took over the lease about 1905, without success.¹¹¹

In 1918 the Melbourne-based Mt Pelion Company, managed by RHT Brook, took over the Launceston based Mt Pelion Company.¹¹² On their leases between Oakleigh and the Pelion Range¹¹³ they followed usual practices with no better luck.¹¹⁴ An adjoining lease, untouched since its abandonment by the MCZMPA, were a stark reminder of near extinct hopes.¹¹⁵

The second area of copper mining was around Barn Bluff. Nothing had been done about Wills' 1893 copper discoveries in the Lakes Windemere-McRae area until Tullah prospectors Thomas Cook and CP Smith re-discovered large ore bodies on north bank of Commonwealth creek in 1899.¹¹⁶ There were two main bodies: a very low grade chlorite one containing a small amount of gold and silver and the more important actinolite with tin and traces of silver and gold.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰*Examiner* 1 June 1901 & PPRST 1900-1901, pp. xxix

¹¹¹McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 58; *TGG* 30 October 1900 for his shares in North Barn Bluff Company & OM Roe 'FAW Gisborne, Global Conservative, Tasmanian resident', *PPTHRA* Vol 47(3), September 2000, pp. 141-160

¹¹²*TG* 17 December 1918

¹¹³McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 4 three 80 acre leases

¹¹⁴McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 58-9 for operations open cuts, trenches, shafts and tunnels, one about 60 yards, - which revealed galena with traces of gold, silver, lead and copper & for managers Robert Lowrie Davidson *TG* 27 May 1919 and Thomas Tuson of Lorinna *TG* 27 May 1919

¹¹⁵McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 60 & forfeiture of leases see *TG* 5 October 1920 under Section 104 of 1917 Mining Act

¹¹⁶McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 5, according to Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 68 this rediscovery was in 1900, while Haygarth, *A View to Cradle*, p. 77 has the year as 1898

¹¹⁷McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 65-6

Several subsequent attempts to develop them had little success.¹¹⁸ Both Barn Bluff Gold, Copper & Silver Mining Company and North Barn Bluff Gold, Copper & Silver Mining Company were Hobart-based companies managed by Edward Charles James, an inveterate promoter of diverse schemes.¹¹⁹ West coast miner-shareholders Cook and Smith might have thought luck was with them after surviving 'great privations' (being tent bound five days because of heavy snowfalls, and almost drowning after several weeks prospecting near Barn Bluff) but were ultimately disillusioned.¹²⁰ In both companies shareholders were Hobartians, west coasters and Huon orchardists: for Barn Bluff over half the shares were held by Hobartians, 40% from the West Coast and the remnant from Franklin. There were only two female shareholders, reflecting male control of finance.¹²¹

Barn Bluff and North Barn Bluff confined themselves to surface trenching for high grade yellow chalcopyrite before Barn Bluff Options Development Association Limited's secured an option and commenced operations in January 1901.¹²² The 160 acre Barn Bluff mine, discovered by Andrews and Swallow in 1898, was about 3 miles east of the Innes track. In a progress report, Smith emphasised that samples

¹¹⁸McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 58

¹¹⁹Of the 2500 shares, £1 each, issued for the former over half were from Hobart, about 40% from the West Coast, mainly Zeehan, and about 10% were from Franklin. Major shareholders included prospectors TW Cook and James Swallow, investors Charles Paul Smith, the first mine manager, W Cotton from Zeehan and and from the capital, James Ashbolt, and merchants, a baker, hairdresser, politician John Bradley MHA and spinster Lydia Benjamin. *TGG* 7 August 1900

¹²⁰*ZDH* 22 May 1900

¹²¹In the North Barn Bluff Company about 70% of the 3,000 shares were from Queenstown, 15% from Franklin-Huon and the remainder, mainly from Hobart. A Queenstown syndicate took up half the shares while from the Huon, orchardists George Griggs, CJ Parsons, GS Parsons and J Higham purchased a hundred each. Mrs Cook, presumably wife of the mine manager, was the only woman shareholder *TGG* 30 October 1900, North Barn Bluff 3000 shares at £ each, while *ZDH* 11 January claimed it was 2000 shares

¹²²McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 64 the Options Development Association's representatives were PT Moore and former Victorian geologist Reginald Murray. The Barn Bluff Company and North Barn Bluff took over Smith's and Cook's leases

were taken 'indiscriminately across both faces [so] they constitute a good round sample',¹²³ as opposed to common practice of sampling only the richest ore bodies. There were many visitors, including mainland experts and directors: the former to add authenticity to reports, and the latter to see that money was well spent.¹²⁴ Later Harcourt Palmer of the Great Western Railway syndicate arrived probably to gauge the area's suitability for one of the seven 70,000 acre lots the Company was putatively to receive for building the line.¹²⁵ Smith and Swallow cleared scrub and button grass, used explosives to obtain assay samples, and transported them by pack horses to lowland markets. They felled timber, excavated a 650' water line, erected fluming, and installed a Pelton wheel.¹²⁶ Investors hopes of a financial return were boosted by government analyst WT Ward's preliminary assays revealing promising traces of copper, gold and silver.¹²⁷ Waller heartened shareholders by suggesting tunnelling under the present spur and the Big Blow, south of Commonwealth Creek. Yet he dampened hopes by indicating that most deposits contained very low copper content which improved with depth.¹²⁸

Beattie's visit in 1901 to the Barn Bluff mines reflected contemporary opinion that mining operations were a tourist attraction. Initially he claimed that Barn Bluff leases confirmed the maxim that 'a mineral show, however rich, in the initial stages of development, in nine cases out of 10, makes a poor photographic show.' Yet Lake Agnew, whose waters supplied motive power to the mine, and around which mining

¹²³See *Examiner* 5 March 1901 & McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 67-69

¹²⁴*Monitor* 22 August 1902 a South Australian expert, James, directors George Lambie and George Griggs, Murray, and Moore. For Moore's comments that the 'mine is developing beyond expectation under able mine manager Smith' *Examiner* 19 February 1901

¹²⁵*Examiner* 19 February 1901

¹²⁶*Examiner* 25 May 1901

¹²⁷*Examiner* 5 March 1901

¹²⁸Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', pp. 68-70 & Map; also comment from *ZDH* 11 January 1901

was occurring, formed 'the loveliest composition I have yet seen in Tasmania.' because of the bays and promontories and a background of Cradle Mountain'.¹²⁹ This pre-occupation with landscape aesthetics was inconsequential to most with mineral interests.

About this time CP Smith, perhaps an avid disciple of his manager, EC James, the master of purple prose, enthused that

I herewith state - and truthfully, too - that all the expectations held out in the prospectus issued by you when floating this property are fully realised, and if the immense ore body we have laid bare counts for anything then Barn Bluff will be working beyond the limits of economical mining. That this mine will work its own wonders is as certain as that tomorrow's sun will rise. I have subordinated every feeling of my nature to that one thought of success. I am working hard, and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that all my labours will be crowned with success, and the Barn Bluff mine become the premier mine of Australasia, as no doubt we have the biggest property under the sun.¹³⁰

Smith was 'working hard' with his essays but on investigation Nature's words remained low grade. Still there were monetary rewards as Barn Bluff shares reached £4.15. in late April 1901.¹³¹

During 1902 the long awaited Razorback track was a partial success. It was shorter but was 'too steep for anything like the ordinary pack load'.¹³² Hopes of a practical all season track to the west never eventuated. Packing charges from Liena were still high: food supplies 1 1/2d per lb, and for explosives and other mining gear 3d per lb. To estimate relative costs it must be remembered that workers and manager at the

¹²⁹*Examiner* 1 June 1901

¹³⁰*Examiner* 5 March 1901

¹³¹*ZDH* 25 April 1901

¹³²Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1902-3', *TPP*, 1903, No. 17, p. xxxii

Devon Mine received 10/- a shift.¹³³ On galena worth £13 per ton, that mine paid £5 per ton for 17 miles conveyance by pack-horse, then another 50 miles to Railton which was 15 miles from Devonport.¹³⁴ Machinery such as a Little Giant Air-compressor and machine drills operated by a 24 inch Pelton wheel were used in tunnelling, which had become the main activity by 1903. From Lake McRae water flowed a mile along an open channel to cliffs overlooking the mine before being conveyed by pipes to the workings.¹³⁵

The grade of the ore and market prices determined availability of finances and the mines' future. The *Hobart Gazette* reveals fluctuating fortunes of Barn Bluff and Barn Bluff Options. To increase capital in 1903, shares were increased by 300 to 10,300 and the value rose by 4/- to £1.4.-.¹³⁶ This was insufficient and within a month EC James gave notice of the first call of sixpence per share, no doubt hoping that work could be revived.¹³⁷ Delay in paying annual rent for three consecutive years (in contravention of the Mining Act) can be regarded as financial astuteness or or evidence of underlying lack of capital.¹³⁸ James' days as manager were numbered and in January 1904 he was replaced by EWH Chant. Within a month an extraordinary general meeting determined the 'advisability of selling, or otherwise disposing of the Company's property'.¹³⁹ Hobart liquidator WF Jacob called for

¹³³Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1902-3', *TPP*, 1903, No. 17, p. xxxii

¹³⁴Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1900', *TPP*, 1901, No. 4, p. xxxi

¹³⁵Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1900', *TPP*, 1901, No. 4, p. xxxi & for 1902 operations see *Monitor* 24 January, 7 February and 25 July .

¹³⁶*HG* 5 August 1902. In July 1902 of the 10,000 £1 shares, the Options Association had purchased half

¹³⁷*HG* 7 July 1903 for capital increase & 28 July 1903 for first call

¹³⁸*HG* 6 October 1903, 4 October 1904 ; forfeiture clause was Section 34, 1884 Mining Act. Roberts, 'The Tasmanian Government & the Metal Mining Industry', pp. 135-74 only indirectly deals with this matter. As well, there is scant summary of major aspects of key mining legislation although Roberts touches upon the need for submission of plans and working sections, pp. 146-7; aspects of forfeiture, pp. 161-64 are neatly presented

¹³⁹*HG* 12 January 1904 for Chant's appointment & 19 January 1904 for extraordinary meeting

creditors to register claims.¹⁴⁰ Yet the Company lingered, advising forfeiture of an eighty acre lease in 1905 and 1906.¹⁴¹

The North Barn Bluff Company adjoined Barn Bluff leases on the north-west. Under Cook's management, there were open cuts and a proposed tunnel to test the nature and extent of the formation. Waller observed that chloritic rocks, highly impregnated with iron pyrites and only small copper pyrites, crossed the companies boundary.¹⁴² Like James and Smith, Cook was also prone to overstatement as exemplified by the assertion of 'thousands of tons of splendid metal. The metal seems to be one mass for about 500ft'. Despite other supposedly promising signs the Company ceased work in April 1903¹⁴³

Contemporaneously other smaller shows continued with similar lack of success. South west of the Barn Bluff lease, a claim was notable in that topographic features — Lake Windemere and Swallow Creek — commemorated work of two lessees.¹⁴⁴ Rumours of English investment sparked renewed interest around 1907, as did the *Examiner* pronouncement that even if parts of copper ore body were not high grade,

¹⁴⁰*HG* 7 February 1905,

¹⁴¹Lease 4920-93M, *HG* 1 April 1905, and 16 October 1906

¹⁴²Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', p. 70

¹⁴³*Examiner* 18 January 1901 & *Examiner* 19 February 1902

¹⁴⁴Despite the country being much disturbed, Waller, 'Report on the Mineral Districts of ...', pp. 70-1 asserted that Swallow and JF Madden's 'show is a very promising one.' For forfeiture under non compliance with labor covenants see *TPP*, 1901, No 73, p. 17. G Renison Bell investigated for the Great Western Syndicate, and AE Bruce, and RJ Rogers took up leases on April Fools day 1901. Other lessees included Edward Eyre, and the Great Western Mineral Prospecting Association of Tasmania, No Liability, in July 1902 and in 1903 JB Hickson and James Reid. *ZDH* 11 January 1901; for forfeiture of leases see *HG* 6 October 1910; for Great Western & Hickson & Reid, & for Eyre. Many smaller groups or individuals mimicked companies behaviour in leaving advance payment of annual rent till forfeiture was nigh. Forfeiture of Bell & Bruce, and Rogers see *HG* 1 October 1901, & *HG* 7 October 1902 & for Lord, Swallow & Erickson *HG* 6 October 1903 & 17 May 1904

with economies of scale the area could 'be made to pay handsomely'.¹⁴⁵ The paper further encouraged investors by reporting that the Mt Lyell Company had taken up 25 sections on Norfolk Plains (unknown location) near Barn Bluff.¹⁴⁶ Again nothing positive eventuated.

Previous failure was no deterrent. Dr Fritz Noetling, employed by the Hobart based Derwent Prospecting Association,¹⁴⁷ produced a glowing report of their three 'Copper Mining Propositions', Derwent, Cradle Mt and Lake Windemere' in 1907. He attributed previous failure to small scale of the operations and lack of capital. If a minimum of £100,000 was expended these mines 'would soon rank as one of the foremost Copper mines in Tasmania, and pay handsome dividends for many years to come.'¹⁴⁸ Nonetheless it failed, as did the misnamed Cradle Mt Copper Mining Company working the glaciated area between Swallow and Curran Creeks.¹⁴⁹ Southwest from the Barn Bluff Mines, the Lake Windemere Gold, Copper, and Silver Mining Company began operations in 1907 around Lakes Windemere and

¹⁴⁵Department of Lands and Surveys: report for 1906-07', *TPP*, 1907, No. 16, p. 12 for Wilk's observation

¹⁴⁶*Examiner* 21 March 1908

¹⁴⁷The Association which selected leases around Lake McRae in September 1908 Managed by TA Tabart junr, with major shareholders GE Brettingham Moore, EH Butler, AH Abbott and Chesterman *HG* 24 July 1906, initially based at NE Dundas. For calls on shareholders see *HG* 27 August 1907 & 1908, 3 March & 29 September; For forfeit at Lake McRae & Whyte River see *HG* 5 October 1909. The Association and also EH Butler, of Derwent Prospecting Association and E Hawson, who assisted Beattie in 1901, failed. *HG* 5 October 1908 for Butler/Hawson who had mineral and water leases

¹⁴⁸F Noetling, *Report on the copper mining propositions held by the Association*, [Launceston?], [1907?], p. 62. Interestingly the Tasmaniana Library copy belonged to CP Smith, prominent miner in the field

¹⁴⁹McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 61-2 Cradle Mt Copper Mining Company reactivated an 80 acre lease previously Lord, Swallow and Erikson, and the Derwent Prospecting Association. In the glaciated area between Swallow and Curran Creeks their deep trenches and shallow pits revealed copper pyrites.

Tasmanian News, Printers, Hobart.
REGISTERED OFFICE: CORNER ELIZABETH & DAVEY STS., HOBART.

The Lake Windermere Gold, Copper, & Silver Mining Company, No Liability.

LAKE WINDERMERE, TASMANIA.

(Registered under "The Mining Companies' Act, 1884.")

CAPITAL - - £3125 in 25,000 Shares of 2/6 Each.

Progressive Nos.

1401 to 1450



No. of Issue 23

This is to Certify that William Batt of Sandy Bay
is a Member of the above-named Company, and holds fifty
Shares therein, on each of which the sum of one shilling has been
paid, subject to the several provisions in the Rules and Regulations of the Company.

Dated at Hobart this twentieth day of August 1907.

E. C. James

W. Batt

Directors.

Ed. S. Anthony Manager.

This Scrip to be delivered to and retained by the Manager upon the transfer of any Share, when new Scrip will be issued, but no Shares will be issued until all Calls thereon are paid.

Calls Payable on the Second Wednesday in the Month.

Transfer Fee, Sixpence.

Figure 37: Scrip for Lake Windermere Gold, Copper, & Silver Mining Co

Figure 38: Shareholders of the Lake Windemere Company

THE LAKE WINDERMERE GOLD, COPPER, AND
SILVER MINING COMPANY, NO LIABILITY.

I, THE undersigned, hereby make application to register The Lake Windemere Gold, Copper, and Silver Mining Company as a No Liability Company, under the provisions of "The Mining Companies Act, 1884."

1. The name of the Company is to be The Lake Windemere Gold, Copper, and Silver Mining Company, No Liability.

2. The place of operations is at Lake Windemere, Tasmania.

3. The Registered Office of the Company will be situated at Elizabeth-street, corner of Dacey-street, Hobart.

4. The number of Shares in the Company is 25,000, of 2s. 6d. each, of which number 12,000 will be issued as paid up to 2s. 6d. each, 5000 as paid up to 1s. each, and 8000 will be held in trust for the Company.

5. The number of Shares subscribed for is 17,000.

6. The name of the Manager is Edward Samuel Anthony.

7. The names and addresses and occupations of the Shareholders, and the number of Shares held by each at this date, are as below:—

Names.	Addresses.	Occupations.	No. of Shares.
Charles Chipman,	Rokeby,	farmer	250
William Cooper,	Hobart,	builder	100
William Batt,	Sandy Bay,	boat importer	100
Ernest E. Cowles,	Sandy Bay,	butcher	100
William McMichael,	Sandy Bay,	gentleman	100
Alfred Nicholas,	Zeehan,	grazier	100
David Nicholas,	Zeehan,	butcher	100
E. S. Anthony,	legal manager (in trust for Shareholders), Hobart		16,150
E. S. Anthony,	legal manager (in trust for the Company), Hobart		8000
			<hr/> 25,000

Dated this 9th day of August, 1907.

ED. S. ANTHONY, Manager.

Witness to signature—W. F. J. PUNSHON.

I, Edward Samuel Anthony, do solemnly and sincerely declare that—

1. I am the Manager of the said intended Company.

2. The above statement is, to the best of my belief and knowledge, true in every particular; and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of "The Statutory Declarations Act, 1837."

ED. S. ANTHONY, Manager.

Taken before me, this 9th day of August, 1907.

E. T. WATCHORN, J.P.

James. Trenches and open cuts only produced ore grades so low that mining was uneconomical even if transport was available.¹⁵⁰

Nearly all ventures started with high hopes which evaporated when subsequent developmental work revealed low copper content. A disinterested McIntosh Reid concluded that the absence of 'commercially valuable concentrations' of copper was the cause of failure. Further he claimed that there was no cogent support for the widespread belief that ore concentrations increased with depth.¹⁵¹ Repeatedly miners ignored the lessons of the past to their own cost.

Wolfram Mine

While constructing the track from Lorinna to Pelion Plains, Hartnett discovered wolfram veins in April 1916. Soon the Mt Pelion Company acquired his selections and by July 1918 commenced work.¹⁵² Company employee Fred Duncan's discovery of the main lode and Hartnett's other wolfram and cassiterite veins finds attracted others.¹⁵³ Following inspection, a hopeful McIntosh Reid avowed that the 'hitherto neglected field promises to become one of the most important mining district of north-central Tasmania.'¹⁵⁴ Wolfram's value depends on it being added to steel to form an extraordinary hard alloy.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 62 & leases taken up in 1908 were forfeited the following year HG 5 October 1909; The southern based Company with Edward Samuel Anthony as manager had Chas Chipman, Rokeby farmer, Zeehan grazier Alf Nicholas and butcher Dave Nicholas, William Cooper Hobart builder and from Sandy Bay, Wm McMichael a gentleman, boot importer William Batt and butcher Ernest E Cowles as major shareholders. Shareholders distinguish between Hobart and Sandy Bay. TGG 13 August 1907

¹⁵¹ McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 69-70

¹⁵² *Weekly Courier* 4 July 1918

¹⁵³ McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 6 & 'Report of the Secretary for Mines for 1917', TPP, 1918-19, No. 10, p. 16

¹⁵⁴ McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 1

¹⁵⁵ *Tasmanian Mail* 8 July 1893 & for physical properties see McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, p. 39



Figure 39: Wolfram Mine, 1920



Figure 40: McIntosh Reid, (Norm?) Parsons & Paddy Hartnett

Northwards along the Forth Valley were a series of leases — Mt Pelion mining Company and those belonging to individuals such as W Douglas of the Birthday Mine or Douglas Prospect, and the Hartnett-Atkins selections including Lone Pine and Hartnett Prospects.¹⁵⁶ Development ranged from nothing on Brook and Hartnett Prospects to the Pelion Company's open cuts, trenches and tunnels. The Company invested heavily in machinery to separate wolfram and cassiterite by wet milling.¹⁵⁷ As sufficient levels of wolfram and cassiterite in veins and access to water or water leases were crucial to success, Reid urged amalgamation between Douglas and the two big groups. In conclusion Reid acknowledged that the developmental stage was sufficiently encouraging to warrant further expenditure and investigation.¹⁵⁸ Omitted but also essential to survival and success were world prices sufficient to exceed production and transport costs.

Tin Fields

Although Will had noticed coal seams near Mt Inglis, it was tin, probably in the cassiterite ore, that attracted notice. The How-Smith-Will saga of 1893 was probably but not necessarily centred in this district. William Aylett received a reward lease in 1910, but after unsuccessful lessees operated in 1912,¹⁵⁹ further activity awaited the Melbourne-based Bluff River Tin Mining Syndicate worked the area around 1920. Some hydraulic sluicing occurred and a few bags of tin oxide

¹⁵⁶Others included Hancock, presumably James, one time manager of Mount Claude Silver Lead Company. The Brook Prospect, discovered by Andrews in the early 1890s on the Oakleigh zigzag, completed the field

¹⁵⁷This involved a water-driven Pelton wheel powered two sets of rollers, a four compartment jig, an elevator, classifier and two wifley tables and finally a magnetic separator to transform crude concentrate into a wolfram slime.

¹⁵⁸McIntosh Reid, *The Mount Pelion Mining District*, pp. 46-57

¹⁵⁹Edwin Orlando Blackwell and James Burrows *HG* 8 October 1912 & forfeiture of one of Blackwell's three leases see *HG* 30 September 1913

were obtained.¹⁶⁰ Again it was the same story of uneconomic quantities of ore and prohibitive transport costs.¹⁶¹

Conclusion

As this chapter's introduction foreshadowed, mining had environmental impact. During exploratory work, vegetation was cleared, mainly by burning,¹⁶² to determine surface structure. In succeeding stages this burning was repeated and the surface modified by open cuts, trenches, adits and tell-tale mullock heaps. More elaborate, but restricted to a few areas, was digging channels for water. With the establishment of camps relatively large numbers of trees, mainly King Billy pines, were felled for use in adits and hut construction, and more particularly, for heating and warmth for miners. Another impact was that game became scarce in the valleys around camps. Destruction of vegetation disturbed microclimates and habitats of many species depriving some of shelters, others of food supplies and increasing competition elsewhere. Browsing by horses around camps and hunting by dogs also impacted on the environment. Some water pollution must have occurred especially in the Lake Will-Lake Curran area and Douglas Creek, where an adit is just above water line. Some modifications were short term such as reduced number of wallabies whereas impact on slow-growing species such as pines was long time. The Mount Pelion Company's buildings — 2 huts, a manager's house, blacksmith's shop and forge — and clearing a hundred square yards for a machinery site

¹⁶⁰TG 31 October 1922, managed by Alan Black, and Ernest Lonsdale Brown

¹⁶¹Whitham, *Western Tasmania*, p.116

¹⁶²*Examiner* 25 March 1898 describes how coal seams near Mt Ossa were clearly visible 'where he fires have cleared the undergrowth.' *Mercury* 5 January 1922 comments on destruction by fire

Figure 41: Dead Trees from burning-off on slopes of Paddy's Nut, 1901



illustrate the nature of local disturbances.¹⁶³ The failure of mining shows reduced the overall impact compared with that on major western fields.¹⁶⁴

Surface scratching persuaded many that the geological structure of the Northern and Central Reserve was probably highly metalliferous. Hopeful and excited shareholders — initially Tasmanian but later mainland — became disillusioned after calls on their capital failed to produce fortunes. Nonetheless in offering hope to investors, small and large, The Reserve became known both by a different group and for a new reason. Mining with its inherent temptations, such as deceptive and misleading interpretation of assay reports, produced many human vices.

Mining's material legacies such as landscape modification, remains of machinery and the Old Pelion hut have been discussed. Only a small number of prospectors and miners, such as Harry Andrews and Joseph Will gained official recognition and a place in Reserve nomenclature. Others such as Chudleigh's Philip Henry Parsons¹⁶⁵, John Hetherington Miller and William Aylett remained in relative obscurity, despite about a decade of guiding, packing and prospecting in the Reserve.¹⁶⁶ These names appear on official leases, but this is small testimony to their endeavours; no show could have existed without the transport of materials, machinery and provisions.

¹⁶³Mt Pelion Company NL 10 January 1919 'Work done' PWD 24/3 or 7

¹⁶⁴Garden, 'Catalyst or Cataclysm?' & JM Powell, *Environmental Management in Australia, 1788-1914*, Melbourne, 1976 provided general comments which accorded with the author's observations over a quarter of a century walking in The Reserve.

¹⁶⁵'Tasmanian Central and West Coast ...', pp. 16-17

¹⁶⁶'Great Midland and West Coast Railway, p. 1 for Aylett & Miller p. 3

Government reports, company prospectuses and Beattie photographs maintained public attention, even if somewhat spasmodically. Extracts from geological reports printed in contemporary newspapers alerted the public to developments and prospects.¹⁶⁷ The Wolfram Track was crucial to making the central reserve accessible to tourists, particularly guided bushwalkers. The Pelion Company huts were invaluable accommodation on the Pelion Plains¹⁶⁸ as was the Barn Bluff camp.¹⁶⁹ Cartography of the Reserve improved from the position illustrated in December 1894 when two bushmen travelling from Mole Creek to Mt Lyell were exposed to hardships when their map showed two instead of four streams.¹⁷⁰

In all this a sense of proportion must be kept. The Reserve's largely non-auriferous geological structure made it less attractive than most Tasmanian fields.¹⁷¹ The region's mines were small by contemporary Tasmanian standards, and often mismanaged. That they were not highly regarded can be inferred by their gaining brief references in annual Ministerial statements¹⁷² and Secretary for Mines Annual Reports. In *The Progress of the Mineral Industry in Tasmania*, an annual assessment from 1897 until 1913, The Reserve is not mentioned.

For most miners and prospectors it was an isolated existence without the bright lights of the bigger western fields. Yet under often harsh conditions the much maligned Australian mateship flourished as in the search for Connolly. Regular

¹⁶⁷ZDH 30 October 1919 contained a summary of Pelion field with subheading 'Field of Much promise'

¹⁶⁸Perhaps one hut remained from Stewart's 1891 survey to the West.

¹⁶⁹*Weekly Courier* 17 February 1921

¹⁷⁰ZDH 12 December 1894

¹⁷¹Ewart, 'Report on Track Mt Pelion', *TPP*, 1902, No. 42, p. 37 refers to positive signs in the Canning Valley

¹⁷²'Ministerial Statement for 1920', *TPP*, 1919-20, No. 8, p. 8 indicated the intention of the company to instal a treatment plant at Mt Pelion

arrivals of packers, hunters, fellow prospectors and others provided news, supplies and human company. These simple comforts and the attractions of the bush sufficed while lasting dreams were nourished by the perennial hope 'That some rich lode amongst these hills is waiting for us yet'.¹⁷³ Many such as Hartnett and Andrews were more at home in the mountains than at their family residence in the low country. It was indeed a man's world with women's role of nurturing the family and looking after its affairs, material and spiritual, both restrictive and liberating.

From the Reserve's short mining history, it seemed unlikely that major fields would be developed unless technological development facilitated the mining of low grade ores or a railway link to the west crossed the region. If such occurred, finance from either mainland or English markets was likely. The Reserve's fortunes were closely linked with the West, which however, had not realised expectations. World prices were the most important variable and one over which Tasmania had no control. A potential obstacle, the new Reserve status was overcome when Surveyor General Counsel supported the move provided mining, timber and pastoralism were permitted.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³PP Quinn, 'The Prospectors Life' in *Tasmanian Mail*, 15 January 1898

¹⁷⁴*Examiner* 30 March 1922

CHAPTER 9

PINING

Between the Wurragarra Valley and Forth River King Billy Pines 'grow very straight and have a handsome appearance, and the timber is of a useful character and very easily split. The sapwood is white and the heart red. It is straight-grained, very light, easily worked, and not unlike cedar in appearance. The timber does not appear to be well known, and seems to merit some attention'.¹

Allan Stewart commenting on King Billy Pine, 1891

Nature endowed the Reserve with three commercially valued indigenous pines, King William or Billy *Athrotaxis selaginoides*, Pencil *Athrotaxis cupressoides* and Celery-top, *Phyllocladus aspleniifolius*.² All are renowned for their longevity: a thousand years is common for the Pencil Pines, while the latter is related to the Methuselah of rainforests, the Huon Pine. Generally the Pencil Pines are found at altitudes of 600 and 1270 metres, but gnarled twisted trees can survive higher exposed montane areas. Mature pines usually range from 25 to 35 metres in height, although 40 metre giants are known. King Billy pines predominate in The Reserve, while the Pencil Pine are in the ascendant on the Central Plateau. RE Smith believed King Billys avoided soils derived from igneous rocks such as dolerite whereas Pencil Pines, related to the famed Californian redwoods, preferred dolerite and basalt. Both pines appear as understorey to the myrtle or beech, *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, in cool temperate rainforests. King Billys, discovered by Ronald Gunn in 1833 along the upper reaches of the Meander, are more often found in stands than are Pencil Pines. Both are straight grained and hence easily worked, durable, light and scented. The sapwood is usually white and the heart a reddish

¹'Mole Creek and Zeehan Railway: Report of the Surveyor-in Charge A Stewart' *TPP* 1891, No. 140, p. 5

²AO Green, 'The Timber Industry', *PPRST*, 1902, pp. 39-76 at p. 53 provides the following information. The King Billy Pine is named because of resemblance of its leaf with selaginella, 'an ornamental tree-moss well known in hot houses'; Pencil Pines have a scent like cedar & leaves of young celery pines resemble the celery plant

pink. The Pencil Pine is the faster growing of the pair, and often found by watercourses and margins of pools. Celery-top Pines differ in resembling yews rather than pines, are smaller, and while not found in pure stands, have a greater territorial range. They are a clear yellow colour and often used where minimal shrinkage is essential. Celery was used in farm implements while the other two were favored for carriage work, joinery and cabinet-making. Despite these differences all are fire sensitive, slow growing and depend upon a minimum monthly precipitation of 50 mm.³

Early explorers were expected to comment on all aspects of the physical environment, including trees. In 1835, on the banks of Lake Petrarch, Surveyor Frankland found a 'remarkably handsome species of fir, which was named the pine of Olympus'.⁴ A half century later, natural historian Legge noted there were insufficient King Billy in Cuvier Valley 'for even a limited timber supply.'⁵ Other major stands remained unrecorded until Surveyor Dooley and Railway Engineer Stewart noted potentially commercial quantities near Cradle Valley and the Pelion Plains areas in the early 1860s and 1890s respectively. On Pine Forest Moor in 1920, Florence Perrin observed immense King Billy pines worth 'thousands of

³From the vast range of relevant literature the following have been used: W Curtis & DL Morris, *Students Flora of Tasmania Part 2*, Hobart, 1980, W Curtis, *Students Flora of Tasmania Part 3*, Hobart, 1980; J Somerville, *Tasmanian Timber Trees*, Hobart, 1981; M Cameron (ed) *Guide to the Flowers and Plants of Tasmania*, Launceston, 1986; RE Smith, 'Notes on the Beeches and Pines of Tasmania', NS 234/19/10, PJ Tighe 'An Introduction to the Cool Temperate Rainforests of Tasmania,' pp. 37-73 in R Jones (ed) *The Tasmanian Rainforest Estate: occurrence, composition, and status as affected by settlement, forestry practices, and management policies*, Hobart, 1982

⁴G Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Head of the Derwent, and to the Counties Bordering the Huon, Performed in February and March 1835*, Launceston 1937, p. 9

⁵WV Legge, 'The Highlands of Lake St Clair', *PPRST* 1887, pp. 114-127 at p. 123

pounds' if they could be floated down the Forth.⁶ Exploitation of these stands and those in Pine valley were dependent upon construction of a railway to the west.

This chapter deals with the commercial exploitation of groves in Cradle Valley. Phases of commercial development are outlined and major figures and commercial uses discussed. In part, this chapter deals with what forest historian John Dargavel has termed 'the wood of neglect', those private and leasehold forests that have been neglected or overlooked by forest historians.⁷ Operations, environmental impact and attitudes to the trees are considered. Much of this story is unknown, especially in terms of its impact on environment, and of the people involved. Related to the latter are such details as level of unionism, hours of work and wages, family affairs, injuries, and attitudes to work and the bush. A yet more complex mosaic would require information about such matters as levels of softwood imports and uses of the pine, but these remain hidden.

Forth farmer James Jones and Dooley sought pines and gold while exploring the Upper Forth in 1857.⁸ Seven years later Dooley's proposal for a pine industry on the Vale of Belvoir attracted official attention.⁹ Drying in situ would almost halve the weight, Dooley claimed, and ease cartage during summer months. Underlying the plan was the need for road construction to the settled districts.¹⁰ Meanwhile in

⁶F Perrin, 'Account of a trip to Barn Bluff via the Forth Valley in January 1920', unpublished manuscript Northern Regional Library, Launceston

⁷J Dargavel, 'Sources and silences in Australian forest history', pp. 39-48 in J Dargavel, D Gaughwin & B Libbis (eds) *Australia's Ever-changing Forests V*, Canberra, 2002, p. 47

⁸N Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff: Philosopher Smith and the birth of Tasmanian mining*, Perth, Tas, 2004, p. 58. Recently, Haygarth doubts that the 1857 trip occurred

⁹'Agricultural areas in Devon', J Dooley's comments December 1863' in 'Crown Lands Reports 1864', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No. 19, pp. 3-4,

¹⁰'Agricultural areas in Devon', J Dooley's comments December 1863' in 'Crown Lands Reports 1864', *TPP* [H of A] 1864, No. 19, p. 4

1859, Philosopher Smith made three prospecting trips to the region drained by the Wilmot, Forth and Leven rivers and their tributaries. Smith found gold and native pines — red-pine, Pencil or scented Pine and celery top.¹¹ King Billy pines were located in stands along the river banks of the Lea, Vale, Upper Dove and a tributary, Pencil Pine Creek, with trees up to four feet in diameter here. The largest trees grew in myrtle scrub between the VDL Company block, were abundant near the Mackintosh River west of Cradle and Dove River, with fewer growing in Cradle Valley. The Pencil or 'Scented' pine was restricted to a small area, half a mile long, along Pencil Pine Creek. Thus ended the discovery phase.

Possibly after discussions with former Nova Scotia timbermen, the Raymonds and William Morgan Crosby, Smith between 1862 and 1867 cut logs before handspiking them to river banks to be floated downstream in times of flood. Smith worked with Jeremiah Johnson and Leopold Von Bibra.¹² The next phase was fraught with difficulty. Soon Nature's unpredictability was evident: heavy rains were variable, numerous rapids made it impossible to use American style rafts and ubiquitous rocks battered logs. As expected, many floated to sea, but near Leith, Smith recovered sufficient logs to be handsawn into timber.¹³ A contemporary described the recovery of the log as a 'conversion into gold' as one log was worth £18.¹⁴ Thus every log mattered as was apparent in an ownership dispute of one

¹¹J Fenton, *Bush Life in Tasmania*, Devonport, 1964, pp. 168-9 for basic details of paragraph & NS 234/2/15 J Smith to J Fenton 11 November 1890

¹²For biographical details of Raymonds see F Gardam, *Sawdust, Sails and Sweat: a History of the River Don Settlement*, Port Sorell, 1996, pp. 301-303; for Jones and Johnson see *Cornwall Chronicle* 6 August 1859 for Dooley's recollection; for Von Bibra, *North-West Post*, 24 February & 3 March 1891 & NS 234/2/15 Smith to Fenton 11 November 1890 No 447

¹³R Smith, 'Early life of James Smith & discovery of Tin, Mount Bischoff', NS 234 & Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff*, p. 74; NS 234/19/2 27/6/28, R Smith to Tourist Advisory Board claims pine were first cut in 1860; some claimed that the pine, compared to the American white cedar, floated half out of the water when green

¹⁴'Through Tasmania', No. 30, *Mercury* 29 March 1884

washed ashore further eastwards.¹⁵ In many ways this mirrored pining operations on the Gordon River in the state's south-west, although there the recovery rate was much higher and stands were more numerous and larger.¹⁶ A tentative move towards forest conservation, the 1865 Waste Lands Act which empowered the taking of trees except those which 'had been reserved or would continue to be reserved either for ornament and shelter.' had no effect on Smith's operations.¹⁷

With Smith's departure, the Crosbys and Raymonds dominated the next stage of the fledgling trade. History abounds in cross-relations: Philosopher Smith had shown King Billy pines in Cradle Valley to Joseph Raymond, William Morgan Crosby was subsequently first manager of the Mt Bischoff mine, while Anthony Raymond's daughter Ethelwyn married the Philosopher's son RE Smith, himself later involved in cutting pine in Cradle Valley. Cousins William Morgan Crosby and Anthony Raymond's expeditions of 1868 and 1869 were epics by any standard. In mid November 1868 they headed up the uncharted River Forth in Crosby's custom-built flat bottomed boat, to assess timber quantities and the feasibility of floating or rafting timber down river. Because of rapids, nine days elapsed before they reached the Forth Gates and then a spring fresh caused a further five day delay. After nearly drowning near a westward spur of Mt Roland they forsook the water. Despite steep terrain and thick vegetation reducing progress to about 3 miles a day, they reached

¹⁵NS 234/3/2 Hainsworth to Smith 22 & 29 August 1871 for a log at Northdown beach east of Devonport

¹⁶G Kerr & H McDermott, *The Huon Pine Story: a history of the harvest and use of a unique timber*, Portland, Victoria, 1999; R Flanagan, *A Terrible Beauty: history of the Gordon River country*, Melbourne, 1985, pp. 71-79 & H Gee & J Fenton (eds), *The South-West Book: A Tasmanian wilderness*, Melbourne, 1983, pp. 141-5 & 192

¹⁷LT Carron, *A History of Forestry in Australia*, Canberra, 1985, p. 61

the old VDL Company crossing. About fifty miles from their departure point they abandoned the mission, retraced steps to the boat and returned downstream.¹⁸

After these travails, they decided that Dooley's suggested overland route was more feasible. The Raymonds, with fellow Canadian Edwin Cummings, organised as Cummings, Raymond & Company, were prominent in many aspects of pioneering business, especially timber mills, at the River Don.¹⁹ In mid-December 1868 the boatman, accompanied by Raymond's father and brother, headed along what became known as 'Pine Road' from Penguin.²⁰ During operations at the Pencil Pine, (miscalled the Dove by the group according to R Smith), which continued until late February, 200 logs, ranging from 5 to 10 feet in diameter, were cut. In contrast to Smith's manual labour, bullocks hauled logs to the river banks. Now, like Smith, they awaited rains and potentially heavy losses.²¹ Despite setbacks, the Raymonds continued at least until 1886.²² The industry also involved other northwest timber cutters, such as Forth pioneers Charlie Riggs and Ted Higgins who cut 70 logs in 1870s.

The *Mercury's* 'Through Tasmania' series in 1884 drew public attention to the trade. The King Billy or Red Pine's qualities, the article claimed, made it an ideal timber for boat building. The timber's natural scarcity was intensified by transport

¹⁸Fenton, *Bush Life*, pp 169-170 & *North-West Post* 24 February 1891

¹⁹For contemporary views of their operations see 'Through Tasmania' No. 29, *Mercury* 15 March 1884

²⁰The 'Pine Road', Smith's third highland track, resulted from winning a contract in 1868, Haygarth, *Baron Bischoff*, p. 74

²¹Fenton, *Bush Life*, pp. 170-171 & *North-West Post* 3 March 1891. In a letter to J Smith, 9 October 1890, James Fenton described having received Crosby's 'interesting accounts', James Fenton of Forth, p 281; R Smith to O Barker, 21 February 1955 & C Ramsay, *With the Pioneers*, p. 94, claimed they cut about 150 logs; details of the overland trips can be found in NS 234/19/13 R Smith to Nomenclature Board 22 November 1964

²²NS 234/2/15, J Smith to J Fenton 9 December 1886 & 13 December 1886

problems. Numerous trees obstructed watercourses so that the chances of this light timber reaching its destination were 'very remote'. Again echoed Dooley's refrain of timber bringing in good money if the country were opened.²³

The 1881 Waste Lands Act created forest reserves in which cutting was forbidden. In 1885 a States Forests Act appointed a Conservator of Forests to manage and control those waste lands 'which may be reserved to Her Majesty for the preservation and growth of timber or for public recreation.' Good intentions were undermined when the officer's duties, powers and responsibilities were not outlined, nor regulations enacted. Conservators GS Perrin and WHT Brown each served a three year term, but found almost insurmountable problems. That year a forest reserve was created under the 1881 Waste Lands Act, forbidding the cutting or removal of pine from an area between the Surrey Hills and Forth River and south to the VDL Company block.²⁴ This decision probably increased pressure on existing stands to the south, including those between Pencil Pine Creek and Cradle Valley. In late June 1901, Dove piners took advantage of the 'splendid opportunities' of heavy rains and swollen rivers to send 'large quantities' of logs downstream.²⁵ This indicated that many still chose the lottery of floating trees rather than hauling them overland.

In April 1905 Spurling's party observed evidence of piners at Pencil Pine and were assured that 'quite a large percentage of the logs felled' reached Forth where they were secured. About this time, southern interests became involved. In 1908 a Hobart businessman contracted Allen, son of Cradle Valley tourist operator Robert

²³'Through Tasmania', No. 31, *Mercury* 29 March 1884

²⁴*HTG* 30 June 1885 under 45° Vict No 5 Sect 6

²⁵*Examiner* 26 June 1901

Quaile, to cut 50,000 superfeet of pine. To assist operations he took bullock team and wagon, the first wheeled vehicle, into Cradle Valley. He uncovered evidence — stumps and some logs still in sound condition — of earlier piners Charlie Riggs and Ted Higgins. Clio's message went unheeded. Quaile cut and dragged to the Dove seventy logs, but only one survived. He succinctly described the aftermath: 'the Hobart man never got logs, I never got paid.'²⁶ Around the same time, Es Connell recalled that Clark and Owen McCarthy cut small quantities of pine in Cradle Valley, and George Williams and Clark operated a mill at Pencil Pine Creek.²⁷

With closure of traditional forest markets and widespread destruction of European timber, World War One presented a unique opportunity for development of the softwood trade. The Smith-Weindorfer land purchases prompted further commercial rivalry. Old players, such as those who cut timber from Perkins Forest, resented the intruders.²⁸ George Sloane's complaint that it was a shame 'for the Government to sell you that fine pine forest'²⁹ exemplified jealousies that arose. So did Smith's concern over rumours of continued logging on his land in 1917, perhaps by Ted Alexander,³⁰ despite permission being withdrawn three years earlier. That year Weindorfer forecast and perhaps hoped, that plans by Williams of Wilmot for harvesting would amount to nothing.³¹ Involvement of bigger

²⁶*Advocate* 29 July 1961

²⁷Es Connell personal comment April 1990

²⁸See Ted Alexander's claims about Lands Department irregularities in administration of timber leases in the area, see FC 7, AOT. This also contains details of a dispute with George Williams

²⁹NS 234/19/1 G Weinforfer to R Smith 28 August 1913

³⁰Alexander was a somewhat controversial character as evidenced by his letter to the *Mercury* 12 August 1922 stating that if it was right to be able to throw stones at wrongdoers, then the public should throw them at the administrators of the state's forests. See also fn 29 above

³¹Whether Owen McCarthy, a small mill operator, possibly the Dove Mill, was immune to this hostility, is unknown. NS 234/19/5, R Smith to Pitt 6 October 1944

outside firms complicated the picture. Devonport's FH Haines³² takeover of Alexander's Pencil Pine mill and acquisition of Claude Davies' Dove Mill reduced competition and in 1918 his Pencil Pine mill commenced.³³ Haines had many advantages: greater economies of scale, more extensive commercial and market links, and probably greater access to credit. All this bode poorly for the remaining players.

Margaret Giordano asserts that Weindorfer's 'great reverence for trees meant that, unlike the earlier pioneers, he had no intention of laying waste around him',³⁴ but in reality the Austrian and RE Smith saw the King Billy pines as a form of insurance, to be harnessed when opportune. Despite his dismay at the unnecessary destruction of pine during the building of Waldheim in 1912, Dorfer was prepared to sacrifice all but four acres around his home. In this he was adopting the buffer zone solution popularised in the late 20th century. Dorfer's fear for the fire sensitive trees, especially after that 'fool' Sloane lit a fire that threatened Smith's Pines until rain averted disaster, can be regarded more as fears of commercial loss rather than aboreal reverence.³⁵ However, somewhat contradictorily, he resented others acting similarly, when bewailing that 'The Pencil Pine Bolsheviks are sawing the pine'.³⁶ By 1918 Dorfer had begun commercial negotiations, with Smith advising attention

³²At one stage FH Haines advertised themselves as Timber merchants, Brick Manufacturers, Contractors and Builders, & Ironmongers

³³NS 234/19/1 R Smith to G Weinforfer 12 September 1917 & 23 September 1917, G Weinforfer to R Smith & for mill R Smith to G Weinforfer 2 May 1918 & for Haines purchase, N Haygarth, *A view to Cradle: a history of Tasmania's Forth River High Country*, Canberra, 1998, p. 157

³⁴M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain: the story of Gustav Weindorfer*, Launceston, 1987, p. 37

³⁵NS 234/19/1 G Weinforfer to R Smith 1 March 1920

³⁶NS 234/19/1 G Weinforfer to R Smith 22 December 1918

be given to Melbourne rather than Sydney interests and to haggle over prices after determining quantity.³⁷

With mainland negotiations failing, Smith turned to the Middlesex's biggest operator. In 1920 Smith, on behalf of Dorfer and himself, began discussions with Haines and GH Causby of Burnie. Haines, ever the sound businessman, initially delayed because of his dealings with another local, George Williams. Haines identified transport costs as the salient issue, believing river transport to be 'out of the Question' while road cartage would require a 'very big outlay', especially as imported hoop pine was so cheap.³⁸ In reality, Haines was seeking to lower the price, notwithstanding the validity of his concerns. Not to be outdone, Smith searched further afield successfully negotiating a contract in December that year with Causby and Burnie solicitors Wilfred Hodgman and Thornton Rockliffe. In returning for selling all marketable timber, not just King Billy Pines, pertinent clauses permitted the purchasers to erect mill(s) and cottages, and to graze stock, but not log the four acres around Waldheim.³⁹

In hindsight it mattered not a whit. Nearly four months later the Burnie Company delayed payment by a month. With the cancellation of the contract in June 1921 neither Smith nor Dorfer received any money from their timber stands.⁴⁰ Contemporaneously, Haines' closure of the Dove Mill in April 1921 was further

³⁷NS 234/1 R Smith to G Weinforfer 30 May 1918

³⁸NS 234/19/1 F Haines to R Smith, 4 & 23 September 1920. Cartage was a major problem with bullocks and horse and wagon involved in the four day trip from forest to the Roland railway Haygarth, *A view to Cradle*, p. 156

³⁹NS 234/19/1 for agreement of 14 December 1920

⁴⁰NS 234/19/1 R Smith to G Weindorfer for a month's delay 2 March 1921; Henry to R Smith 14 May 1921 little chance of contract being honoured and Henry to R Smith 3 June 1921 for cancellation

evidence of market decline.⁴¹ Thus Dorfer, already suffering from a paucity of tourist visitors, began working at Haines' mill, with some timber coming from near Waldheim.⁴² Soon he proudly boasted of his newly acquired skills to his sister:

Covered with the mud of the virgin-forest, I drive four of the strongest draught-horses one behind the other, hauling logs with heavy chains. No reins are needed words are sufficient It gives me experience which I shall very soon be able to use in my own pine forest⁴³

This talent was useful but his dream of retirement remained just that.

Smith realised that the infant pine industry faced stiff international competition from Russian and Canadian pine, New Zealand white pine and nationally from Queensland pine. Rivals had established international reputations, had production networks based on larger forests and existing infrastructure. Local costs, especially cartage and labour, had to be reduced, while economies of scale were limited by small volumes of timber. Thus Smith broke down costs from the Dove to market:

cutting & sawing logs	6d,
cutting tracks	6d,
dragging with bullocks to end of scrub	2/-,
dragging - edge scrub to mill at Pencil	
Pine river with horses, about 3 miles	2/-;
sawing at Mill	5/-,
carting to junction of Cradle Mountain Rd	
& VDL Rd 3.5 miles	3/-,
junction to Staverton station	16/-
Total	£1-9--44

It seemed that economies would be hard to find. With state wages boards lifting labour costs, Smith concentrated on improving Bob Quaile's 1909 track from

⁴¹Mac, 'A trip to Cradle Mountain', in *Weekly Courier* 10 February 1921 claimed that the tiny saw mill was profitable even after carting logs 40 miles to the railway.

⁴²NS 234/19/1 G Weinforfer to R Smith 9 February 1921 for commencement at mill

⁴³G Weinforfer to R Moritsch 30 January 1921 in G Bergman, *Gustav Weindorfer of Cradle Mountain*, Hobart, 1959, p. 46

⁴⁴NS 234/19/2, 6 May 1922, all costs per hundred superfeet of timber, six years later comparable costs had increased to £1.18.6, NS 234/19/2 1 May 1928

Middlesex to Cradle Valley to curtail cartage expenses. Yet this required both Kentish Council and state government support.

Bureaucratic changes came slowly. In 1898 Lands Secretary Counsel's report resulted in a Forests Branch within the Lands Department. Then as the War approached there was the paradoxical position of J Compton Penny, Chief Forestry Officer, being diffident about a separate Forestry Department. A scathing report by British expert DE Hutchins which castigated Tasmanian forest operations, and pressure by the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Forest League, eventually brought about a response with the passing of the 1920 Forestry Act which came into operations the following year.⁴⁵ Thus the industry became more regulated. From May 1920 timber licences were required and a royalty of 25/- per 1000 super feet was payable.⁴⁶

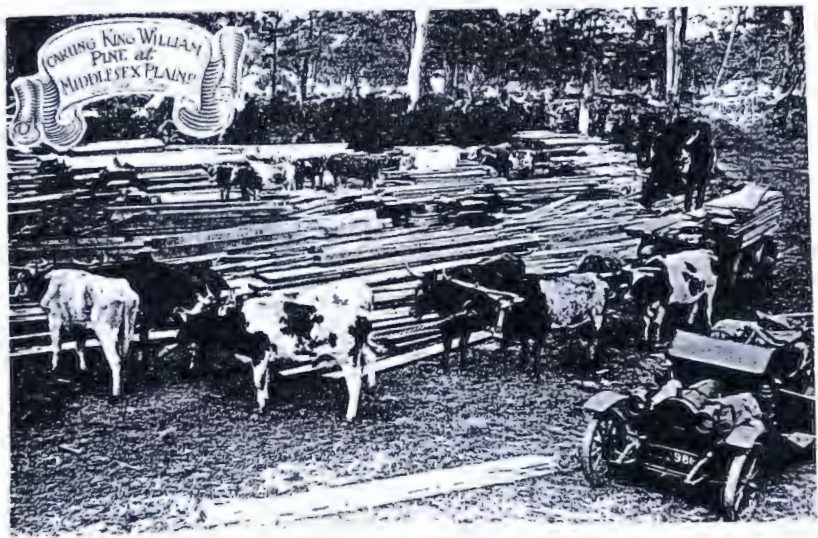
Man and beast, horse and bullock, dominated forestry practices with motor power, often steam, restricted to mill operations. However, in post-milling operations, the position was nearly the reverse. Motor trucks were in their infancy, while the steam horse was a reliable hauler of large loads. The salience of traditional axe and crosscut saw work with associated skills of knowing how to cut and fall trees, hand-eye co-ordination and muscular endurance remained undiminished.⁴⁷ There were

⁴⁵Carron, *A History of Forestry in Australia*, pp. 61-5 & for Forest League see S Petrow, 'Save the Forests: forest reform in Tasmania, 1912-1920' pp. 163-183 in Dargavel, Gaughwin & Libbis (eds) *Australia's Ever-changing Forests V*; for general changes in forestry see N Mooney, 'Forging the Forest State', BA Hons (History), University of Tasmania, 2004

⁴⁶TG 30 March 1920 for details of timber licences under the 1911 Crown Lands Act. Regulations included details of licences such as where applicable, rights of holders, brands and girth sizes eg King Billy were not meant to be taken unless three feet from the ground the tree's girth, inclusive of bark, was 4'6".

⁴⁷G Borschmann, *The People's Forest: a living history of the Australian bush*, Blackheath, NSW, 1999, pp. 262-5 'The Riverman Reginald Morrison' describes different uses of axes and the 'chuting' pine logs into rivers

Figure 42: Operations in King Billy Forest near Cradle Valley



different axes for different purposes, with the 'Kelly' and 'Plum' much favored. With less butt swelling than eucalypts, the pines were cut much closer to the ground, the exact distance varying according to the axeman's discretion. The type of crosscut saw remains unknown. A major change since pining had commenced was the replacement of hand-spiking logs into the streams by bullock or horse-hauling. The specific skills of handling bullocks — placement of beasts, developing teamwork, attachment of wires to logs and the dragging route — were important.⁴⁸ In dragging or snigging pines over soft ground, perhaps a shoe, as used for Huon pines, was fitted to stop the nose digging into the ground. Details of chutes, or shoots, whether heading down slopes or into streams, are all unknown as are types of saws within mills.⁴⁹ Haygarth's description of milling eucalypts in the Middlesex area is pertinent to operations of the small pine mills.⁵⁰ Floating logs downstream was used on Tasmania's west coast and for red cedar and hoop pine in New South Wales and Queensland.⁵¹

Conclusion

If our knowledge of European impact on forests is limited, then that of Aboriginal use will probably never be known. Anthropologist Charles Mountford explained what reading the forest meant in general for Aborigines. He asserted that

the natives must acquire a profound knowledge of the rhythms of their country. From early years they learn when the vegetable foods ripen, and where they may be gathered; the seasons of the year when the reptiles wake

⁴⁸Borschmann, *The People's Forest*, pp. 202-04 'The Bullocky Henry Steers' provides details of handling bullocks

⁴⁹Perhaps techniques were similar to that given in K Frawley, 'Logging Technology and Forest Cutting Practices', pp. 143-163 in J Dargavel & S Feary (eds), *Australia's Ever-Changing Forests II*, Canberra, 1993, pp. 150-1

⁵⁰Perhaps Haygarth's description in *A view to Cradle*, pp. 157-8 of eucalypt mills is applicable.

⁵¹Frawley, 'Logging Technology', p. 154

from their winter sleep, when the animals reproduce, and in what place there will be water to drink.⁵²

The Aborigines have developed a calendar, 'based on the movement of the heavenly bodies, the flowering of certain trees and grasses, the mating of local birds, and the arrival of migrant ones. All these signs are related to food-cycles on which their living depends.'⁵³ While it is highly probable that there were seasonal visits, the triggers and signs during seasonal visits to the high country remain unknown. NJB Plomley's Aboriginal word-list contains names for some trees found in The Reserve such as myrtle, wattles, blackwood and eucalypts, but none for the indigenous pines, the focus of this chapter.⁵⁴

Some of the environmental impacts have already been described in previous land use chapters. By altering habitats for arboreal animals and birds, the felling of pines probably disrupted aspects of ecosystems such as territorial patterns and microclimates. The concentration of humans and animals also impacted on vegetation which had evolved under more gentle pressures. Possibly there was more localised damage by humans than any other form of human exploitation with the possible exception of mining. Human impact sites included cutting areas, tracks along which timber was dragged, mills, sawdust heaps and huts. As well, river ecosystems had been damaged by earlier phases, particularly along banks and then local damming by logs interrupted river flows and thus aquatic ecosystems.

Market forces appeared to be the sole determinant of the future of logging in Cradle Valley. The utilitarian view of forests dominated official thinking, although

⁵²CP Mountford, *The Dreamtime*, Adelaide, 1970, p. 11

⁵³Mountford, *The Dreamtime*, p. 11

⁵⁴NJB Plomley, *A Word-List of the Tasmanian Aboriginal languages*, Hobart, 1976

conservationists, advocating the wise use of resources, suggested improvements in processing. WHT Brown, Conservator of Forests, typified utilitarianism when he commented that if a bed of King Billies supposedly located on the Picton River could be carted to market, the government would sanction the cutting.⁵⁵ By contrast, Lands and Works Minister O'Reilly's concern for the destruction of Huon Pines along the Gordon and Pieman in 1882, exemplified conservationist views.⁵⁶ Some sought promulgation of and strict enforcement of laws, while others suggested reforestation.⁵⁷ The Dobson government's decision to retrench Brown's post in 1893 indicated the limitations of interest.⁵⁸ A rare foreshadowing of modern ultra-preservationist ideas came in AM's lamentation, 'Forests in Tasmania and Elsewhere'. The lover of trees, he asserted, regards

with indignation a man who wilfully and needlessly destroys one. He inflicts an irreparable loss on himself and his children, perhaps to the third and fourth generation. God and Nature took a hundred years and more to build it up in beauty, and this ruthless barbarian blasts it in half-an-hour.⁵⁹

Today, native pines are regarded as attractive. This, however, was not always the case. Calder thought the pencil pines east of the Walls of Jerusalem 'dark and dreary looking'.⁶⁰ According to historian and bushwalker, Jack Branagan, in the 1920s and 1930s sawmiller and farmer George Stubbs 'genuinely could not

⁵⁵Report of the Conservator of Forests on Picton and Port Davey District', *TPP* 1890, No. 79, p. 5

⁵⁶*Tasmanian Mail* 1 April 1882; for government concern see also the 1879 Select Committee into the 'preservation from utter destruction of the indigenous forest trees known as Huon Pine and Blackwood'.

⁵⁷*Tasmanian Mail* 25 February 1882

⁵⁸*Tasmanian Mail* 17 September 1892

⁵⁹*Tasmanian Mail* 12 October 1883. For forests evoking a sense of piety and the 'silent grandeur and solitude of the virgin forest' see L Gillbank 'Von Mueller's perceptions of Victorian forests' pp. 3-14 in Dargavel & Feary, *Australia's Ever-Changing Forests II*, p. 13

⁶⁰J Calder, *Topographical Sketches of Tasmania 1845 and 1847 From Deloraine to Emu Bay; and to the Great Lake and Nineteen Lagoons*, Adelaide, 1987, pp. 65 & 74

understand anyone wishing to preserve the trees. He thought that people who put beauty before profit were slightly batty'.⁶¹

From the early days of colonisation, study of The Reserve's native pines forged links with the international scientific community. Increasingly scientists saw the species as part of a system, something noted almost instinctively by wiser hunter/snarers. Artistic and photographic depiction brought the trees and the area under public notice. At a regional level there was a commercial link, albeit tenuous, between The Reserve and coastal mills. For other Tasmanians occasional descriptions and photos in weeklies, *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail* and *Weekly Courier* were reminders of the non-tourist commercial value of this scenic area.

There had been developments with potential for significant change. Notable were the creation of a new government body, the Department of Forestry, in 1921 and the promulgation of a scenic reserve rather than a national park for the Cradle Mt-Lake St Clair area. Thus pining, if commercial signs were propitious, could continue right up to The Reserve's northern boundary. The new department was likely to increase royalties, which would add to commercial costs.⁶² Continued pining seemed increasingly dependent on national and international economic conditions, beyond local control. In all this it must be remembered that forests were limited and quantities milled were very small, so to modify Dargavel's phrase, the chapter was about 'the small wood of neglect'.

⁶¹M Giordano, *A Man and a Mountain*, p. 110

⁶²The 1885 Forests Act introduced royalties on Huon Pine: 1d per each super footfelled for export and 1/2d for Tasmanian use. These charges were considered too high and were reduced to 1/2d and nothing about 1890, Gee and Fenton, *The South West Book*, p. 194

CHAPTER 10

WALKING

From the top [Mt Perrin] we had a wonderful view, it was a glorious day, there was a very sea of blue mountains in every direction, we were surrounded, we could also see several gorges, their steep sides hickly clothed in gums and myrtle forest.¹
Florence Perrin 1920

The intellectual framework encompassing identification, appreciation and development of wild landscapes, which was an essential precursor for walking for recreation, has been outlined in the Introduction. As with English Romantic tourism and pedestrianism, public awareness of picturesque sites through word-of-mouth, newspaper reports, tourist guides, art exhibitions and photographs, improved transport links and an affluent class partly free from the restrictions of time were pre-requisites for development. This chapter deals with the unfolding of these ideas and examining links between the colony and international intellectual trends up to the 1880s. Then a small, but ever increasing, number of individuals began walking for pleasure in remote areas. A number of walks to different areas of The Reserve are described as are attitudes to landscape. Methods of transport to the area and aspects of walking such as clothing, equipment and food are considered. Although the majority of walkers formed loose groups, there were a few attempts to formalise these arrangements by establishing walking clubs.

From its foundations, Van Demonian society was inextricably linked to world-wide forces, despite a minimum time lag of three to four months. Dissemination of Romanticism and recent developments in literature and art were transmitted by correspondence, imports of literature and personal visits. Diverse examples

¹Florence Perrin, 'Account of a trip to Barn Bluff via the Forth Valley in January 1920', unpub manuscript Launceston Regional Library

illustrate this connexion. The *Hobart Town Courier* publicised *Ebell's Guide to Switzerland* as a necessity for such a tour where

Your soul may long with a deep longing for the Alps, the Simplon and the Glaziers.— for one intense gaze on the Rhine, Geneva, and Lucerne — one glorious ramble through Clarens and Lausanne.²

Return trips 'Home' strengthened these affiliations. Mrs Jane Williams' 1840 journey to Scotland illustrated many of the new trends. She commented on Classic Romantic sites such as picturesque ruins on the outskirts of Stirling and the 'very magnificent & beautiful' Lomonds.³ Thus 'mountain glory' prevailed, even for those geographically isolated from the epicentre of intellectual trends.

Painters began to interpret the colonial landscape in the 1820s from a British perspective. From *Western or Boundary Lake* Joseph Lycett described the Tiers as being in 'general grand, though wild' while to the westward from *Beaumont's Lake* the distant snowy mountains 'form a fine contrast to the other part of the view'. The *Scene on the River Huon*, was 'so extremely grand and picturesque, it may justly be described as sublime.'⁴ Bernard Smith discusses the differences between Lycett's on the spot sketches and later engravings for the English market.⁵

John Glover's arrival in 1831 provided impetus to local artists. His previous watercolours and oils included works on romantic mountains and lakes in Scotland, England and Switzerland. Local commissariat officer GWTB Boyes, himself a competent water colourist, observed Glover's techniques for representing perspective and proportion of mountains without losing their grandeur.⁶ A Glover sketchbook

²HTC 3 March 1830, p 2

³PL Brown (ed) *Clyde Company Papers, Vol II 1836-40*, London 1940. pp. 374-5

⁴J Lycett, *Views in Australia or New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land delineated*, London, 1824-5, no pagination.

⁵B Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, Melbourne, 1989, pp. 237-9. Some argue that Lycett never visited Tasmania

⁶For personal details of Glover see B Smith, 'John Glover', *ADB* Vol II, pp. 455-56,

contains a number of views of Mt Olympus and Lake St Clair.⁷ McPhee claimed the artist visited St Clair in 1834, a year before Frankland's 'discovery'.⁸ The painting, *Cawood on the River Ouse*, indicates that Glover may have continued up country towards the Lake. Glover's ascent of Ben Lomond is circumstantial evidence that he was capable of performing such a trip. Art curator David Hansen believes that he copied the now missing Frankland's sketches. The absence of any record from Glover or a contemporary, supports this view. Glover's dogma that 'he who would represent nature truly must be familiar with all her varying features'⁹ is nevertheless sage advice. In 1835 Prout and Glover met at *Patterdale*. Whether discussions included the Lake will remain a matter of conjecture as will the influence each exerted on their own and later generations.¹⁰ Prout cited Frankland's sketches as the catalyst for his visit to Lake St Clair. (See Chapter 3)

Earlier Surveyor General Frankland lamented that 'our beautiful Rivers and mountains have as yet had no one to pourtray them.' In explanation he remarked that the colony was 'composed for the most part of persons who are exceedingly deficient in the more elegant acquirements.'¹¹ Frankland's 1835 visit and the Franklin expedition seven years later to Lake St Clair have been described in Chapters 2 and 3. Within two years of the vice-regal visit, news of the Lake had spread amongst pastoralists. William Dixon drowned when the whaleboat intended for St Clair capsized in the Derwent.¹² It can be assumed that Lake St Clair became an topic of general conversation amongst establishment circles following

⁷D Hansen, *John Glover and the colonial picturesque*, Hobart, 2003, p. 287 Sketchbook No 102 in National Library of Australia, Knivell collection,

⁸J McPhee, *The Art of John Glover*, Melbourne, 1980, p. 30, p. 31 is a View from Mt Olympus; G Frankland, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Head of the Derwent, and to the Countries Bordering the Huon, Performed in February and March 1835*, Launceston, 1937, pp. 6-7

⁹H Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam*, Launceston, 1993, p. 121

¹⁰McPhee, *The Art of John Glover*, p. 46

¹¹G Frankland, *Five letters from George Frankland in Van Diemen's Land*, Adelaide, 1997, p. 24 Frankland to RW Hay 16 August 1829

¹²*Hobart Town Advertiser* 29 November 1844; Kerr diary 27 November 1844 & 5 December for news of inquest. The party included Henry and James Thomson and John Jamieson

Figure 43: Surveyor General Frankland, 'View from Mt Olympus'



Prout's 1845 excursion. Louisa Anne Meredith described Prout's influence in creating 'a landscape-sketching and water-colour fever ... raging with extraordinary vehemence among the usually too placid and pathetic sons and daughters of Tasmania'.¹³ Subsequent art exhibitions featuring works by Prout and his companions De Wesselow and Fraser also contributed to the Lake's newsworthiness. In early April 1845 Hamilton resident JF Kerr, with a small holding at around Bronte, and Dorothea and Elizabeth Young of *Hunter's Hill* travelled to Bronte with the intention of visiting St Clair.¹⁴ Together, these rambles indicated that not only was the southern Reserve a valuable pastoral asset but was also a scenic attraction. The trip was not considered too arduous for women, at least those who were competent horse riders.

During western exploration in search of gold increasing numbers observed the Southern Reserve. Walking for pleasure was not the predominant motive, although some such as Government Geologist Gould appreciated the montane landscape. News of the area spread as prospectors were drawn to the area.

Captain H Butler Stoney travelled to the Lake in 1856. His 'enraptured eye' feasted on

The snow-white beach lining the borders of the lake ... adorned by native shrubs, and strewn with shells and pebbles of every description: the 'waratah,' mingling the brilliant red of its blossoms with a thousand different shades of foliage, is more entrancing to the eye than words can well express.¹⁵

It was a moment of epiphany with 'the stranger amply repaid for all the discomforts of his journey, when in the midst of a scene upon which he cannot but gaze in

¹³L Meredith, *My Home in Tasmania*, London, 1852, pp. 204-5

¹⁴Kerr's diary of 13 February 1845 notes that Hamilton resident, Tarleton, & Barrow & party headed to Lake St Clair

¹⁵H Butler Stoney, *Residence in Tasmania*, London, 1856, p. 101

ecstasy.¹⁶ That same year, 1854, FJ Cockburn became the first known pedestrian to visit the Lake for the sake of walking. Like Butler Stoney, but for different reasons, Cockburn thought himself well rewarded for his efforts. (See Chapter 3)

Although painters remained influential, the new technology of photography increasingly shaped public perceptions. Chapter 3 described the visit by Morton Allport's party to Lake St Clair in 1863.¹⁷ The composition of his 24 stereoscopic views, among the nation's earliest wilderness photographs, reflected influences of his tutor, Prout. Many Hobartians became aware of the area's beauty following Allport's display at the Hobart Art Treasures Exhibition in March that year.¹⁸

Throughout the 1860s and 1870s exploration for minerals, and to a lesser extent pastoral land, dominated government thinking. About a decade later, the Northern reserve followed suit. Almost contemporaneously the successful introduction of trout in 1864, the spread of railways from the 1870s and better defined routes to the newly explored west, spawned a nascent tourism industry whose reach occasionally extended to Lake St Clair.

Visits by artist WC Piquenit, politician-explorer JR Scott in 1873, and Governor Weld five years later enhanced the area's reputation. Gubernatorial visits gave an official imprimatur with lesser lights sometimes following in the footsteps. That many pastoralists were men of curiosity about the natural world is attested by their membership of the Royal Society. Some would probably have taken the opportunity to visit the Southern Reserve whilst on their pastoral inspections. Art exhibitions, word of mouth and newspaper reports contributed to St Clair's reputation as a scenic attraction. The tourist guide book genre, beginning with

¹⁶Butler Stoney, *Residence in Tasmania*, p. 102

¹⁷G Stilwell, 'Morton Allport', *ADB*, Vol 3, pp. 28-9

¹⁸G Winter, 'First Views: Morton's Allport's photographs of Lake St Clair, 1863',

Walch's Guidebook, 1871, played its part in promoting the area, as demonstrated in Chapter 3. JJ Stutzer's description of rain forests contained in the *Guidebook* is an early example of such enchantment with temperate rainforests as dominates modern conservation tastes.

As indicated in Chapter 4, there was little tourist and bushwalking activity around Cradle before the 1890s. A tourism guide explained that Cradle was inaccessible for most

unless they are prepared for some toil, accompanied by considerable danger, and even then it is very likely that they would not succeed in penetrating the dense forests which clothe its lower slopes.¹⁹

Bushwalking as we know it today commenced in The Reserve and on its fringes as outlined in Chapter 5. Accessibility resulting from the route wars and the role of photographers, such as Beattie and Spurling, were significant. The Reserve became the preferred destination of a small, but growing number of affluent men and women. Locals acted as guides and packed supplies.²⁰ Huts belonging to cattlemen, miners, piners and hunters provided shelter, despite tents being used occasionally. Trips were fashionable and newspaper accounts spread details of wild country. State and local government and individuals provided basic tourist infrastructure, such as roads and accommodation. By 1922 when Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair became a scenic reserve, automobiles had reached Lake St Clair and the noise of motors disturbed its tranquillity.

Peregrinator's excursion of 1890-91, outlined in Chapter 4, was evidence of The Reserve's changing status.²¹ After an unsuccessful attempt in 1888,²²

¹⁹Union Steam Ship Company, *Tourists' Guide to Tasmania*, Hobart, 1890, p. 75

²⁰Tasmanian Railways, *A Short Guide to the North Western and North Eastern Districts*, Hobart, 1902, p. 5 described how guides could be obtained from the Mole Creek district

²¹*Examiner* 28 February, 4 & 11 March 1891

²²*Tourists' Guide to Tasmania*, pp. 75-77

Launcestonians — 'Peregrinator', WD Weston,²³ Ernest M Law²⁴ and Richard Ernest Smith — again tried to ascend Cradle Mountain in the Christmas-New Year of 1890-91. From Launceston they took a train to Mole Creek, then walked the remainder of the way with the steep ascent of Five Mile Rise helped by 'the mountain beauties'.²⁵ Stockmen's, Stanley's and Fields, and miner's huts, at the Great Caledonian Mine, offered welcome respite. On the way to Middlesex Plains they followed an old bridle track, 'for the most part well marked and easy to be followed, at any rate by a bushman'.²⁶ Descriptions were conventional: Cradle and Barn Bluff 'looked very grand, towering above a stretch of open highland, properly known as Hounslow Heath',²⁷ and the stupendous ravines to the West, were 'so deep that they seemed abysmal'. Gilpin's picturesque re-surfaced: 'the effect of a gleam of sunshine ... and the lowering clouds [upon undulating country] made a picture of beauty that I have rarely seen surpassed'.²⁸ Then there is a soliloquy about Creation. 'Cradle Lake', presumably Dove Lake, was

a noble expanse of clear and crystal water, ruffled only by the evening breeze. We had been seeing the grandeur of nature and now we beheld its plaintive softness. Had sorrow of solitude caused the last vestige of joy to cease in the regions round; so how was all so still? Even the mountain-jay, habitant of the most trackless wilds, seemed for once to be a stranger there. Sound, there was none. Yonder stood the frowning buttresses of the mountain, far over the ripples many a glistening silver line revealed a stream plunging in headlong fury down the distant slopes, and there asleep in the very arms of nature herself lay a tiny lakelet, whose breast was sacred e'en to the evening zephyr. How comes it that so much of the world's intensest scenes of beauty are set in minor key? What makes the sighing breeze so plaintive? So many scenes of loveliness an echo of life's sadness? Is not the voice of the great Creator speaking in His creation, that now groaneth and travailleth together, telling His child, man, that earth is not his rest?²⁹

²³For autobiographical details of William Dubrelle Weston, Launceston solicitor & 'well acquainted with most of the Tasmanian mountains, the highest and more remote of which he has ascended', see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. II, 1900, pp. 327-8

²⁴For autobiographical details of the Launceston solicitor, *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol. I, p. 327

²⁵*Examiner* 28 February 1891 supplement

²⁶*Examiner* 4 March 1891

²⁷*Examiner* 4 March 1891

²⁸*Examiner* 4 March 1891

²⁹*Examiner* 11 March 1891

The ascent was not one of heroic endeavours overcoming immense problems; rather 'a cool head and sound judgement were required to avoid nasty slips.'³⁰ From the summit the party traced previous trips, notably their epic from Great Lake to St Clair via the Amphitheatre and Upper Murchison, and observed probable difficulties for Hobart-Zeehan and Mole Creek to Zeehan railways in the Canning Gorge. The flora, especially waratah, blanfordia or Christmas Bells and native boronia, captivated the trio, while wild cattle on Middlesex kept them alert. A meeting with hunters from Castra who had walked via Black Bluff was noteworthy. A conclusion that the trip 'remains a pleasing reminiscence of the past and a joy for the future', foretold many similar utterances.³¹ When Surveyor EG Innes asserted in 1896 that the Mole Creek to Zeehan way

would be a favourite tourist route in Tasmania, as it could not be beaten for beauty. The Gordon could not be compared to it, and it is quite up with Port Davey, and would for travellers be the easiest of access³²

he bore testimony to the area's attractiveness as well as boosting his own reputation as trackmaker.

Other ascents of Cradle followed the pattern of triumphal perseverance established by Peregrinator. Overlapping JW Beattie's later career was Stephen Spurling III or junior, scion of three generations of photographers which began with the opening of a Hobart studio in 1865. He, together with Beattie, dominated Tasmanian landscape photography. According to photographer and historian, Jack Cato, the invention of dry plate photography 'created modern photography' relegating wet plates, daguerrotypes etc to the dark ages. Dry plates were faster, had a longer life and with the coincidental arrival of newer lenses, permitted much faster speeds.³³ Although these changes were useful to all forms of photography, the landscape

³⁰*Examiner* 4 March 1891

³¹*Examiner* 11 March 1891 Blanfordia or Christmas bells

³²*Examiner* 30 December 1896 letter to Sec of Public Works

³³J Cato, *The story of the Camera in Australia*, Melbourne, 1977, pp. 62-4

school was the major beneficiary. Governments and nascent tourism quickly seized the opportunity and specific landscapes, such as St Clair, became integral to promotional campaigns.

An outdoor enthusiast, Spurling joined the family business in 1902 and took over the landscape work.³⁴ He made several trips to the Reserve: Pelion in 1898, Cradle in 1905, St Clair in 1913 and 1914 when he took the first movies of the area, and two more to the headwaters of the Mersey.³⁵ In March 1898 the *Examiner*, befitting a paper representing the hub of Tasmanian mining speculation, dispatched its editor FJ Prichard, Spurling, guide Phil Parsons, and assistants Knowles and Wilson, to report on progress of North and West Direct Route Association's track from Mole Creek to the West Coast.³⁶ From Mrs Stanley's hut at Liena, they wound up Gad's Hill, and then rode over undulating country on the Berriedale and Mackenzie Plains (known locally as February Plains). From The Divide they were greeted by an array of mountains from Mt Pillinger (Mt Mag) to the Rugged Tier, varying in colour from greens, with bush-fire browns to grey granite tops. Romantic description ensued:

As the fleecy masses of vapour swept over the peaks the effect was very beautiful, and the bare summits, broken into all kinds of fanatastic shapes, would peer through the white clouds like the battlements of some giant's castle.³⁷

Views of the Upper Mersey from the shoulder of Mount Oakleigh evoked memories of 'scenes that Piquenit loves to put on canvas, for it had that peculiar mezzo tint over the landscape in which he excels'.³⁸ District Surveyor Chalmers

³⁴For Spurling's background see Cato, *The story of the camera in Australia*, p. 166

³⁵For Spurling family details see C Long, *Tasmanian Photographers 1840-1940: a directory*, Hobart, 1995, pp. 105-107 & G Perrin to Hazel Spurling, 8 February 1968; his first rip to St Clair may possibly have been in 1905

³⁶For Prichard see *Cyclopedia of Tasmania*, Vol II, p. 80 & R Ferrall, 'Frederick John Prichard', *ADB* Vol 11, pp. 290-1

³⁷*Examiner* 23 March 1898

³⁸*Examiner* 23 March 1898

initially, and then track cutter Broomhall, provided the knowledge to guide them to the Pelion mining huts. Here the track concluded, so the party proceeded on foot to the head of the Forth Gorge, under Pelion West to Mt Inglis where lack of huts and an approaching storm led to a Pelion retreat. There were comments on mining shows, tourist potential, tracks, new and old, potential sites for huts and benefits for northern Tasmania.³⁹

In autumn 1898 Kletterer succeeded after snow and inability to find the track defeated earlier attempts. Again landscape descriptions may well have come straight from Gilpin's works. Around Middlesex there were 'most beautiful, varying from English park-like stretches among the smaller plains, to the wildest lake and mountain scenery further out.' There was a 'magnificent view of the grand old Cradle towering up like a ruined cathedral from the open high level country'. All prompted photos that were bad, but the 'only ones taken in Tasmania over 5,000ft above sea level'. They included one of a sullen Cradle, rising

out of the south end of the lake some 3000' sheer, with a fringe of pine along the foot, and a few hundred feet of brilliant yellow and scarlet patches of the native deciduous shrub, 'fagus', just then in its autumn glory above that short stunted scrub and then the bare basalt column shooting up in giant pinnacles, as sharp as needles apparently.⁴⁰

Unlike later trips the climb was along a 'steep and dangerous track', whereas he declared that an ascent of Barn Bluff was 'said to be impossible.'

Development of mines in the Middlesex district strengthened claims for developing roads and tracks. Around 1900 there was a shift in emphasis with walking from an established base being the important aspect of the trip or expedition. Railways were used to the nearest station to the attraction, then groups used horse and cart, or walked but had packhorses to carry gear. During and after the war, cars made an

³⁹*Examiner* March 24 & 25 1898

⁴⁰*Tasmanian Mail* 2 April 1898

Figure 44: Use of Pack-horses



(a) Ascent of Razorback Track



(b) Descent of Zigzag Track from Mt Oakleigh

Figure 45: Motor Cars



(a) on the Round Hill Mine Road



(b) Near Lorinna

appearance. By saving travel time groups were able to spend more time at their destination. Thus cars motored along the Linda track to reach St Clair while in the north they drove to Mole Creek or Sheffield. Despite these improvements, there were still concerns about dangers of inclement weather encountered across the February Plains. Alternative routes such as the Razorback, while shorter, suffered from gradients, in Dan Griffin's words, 'so steep that a religiously inclined native tiger would say his prayers before attempting to chase a wallaby along it'.⁴¹ Many continued to use the Innes Track or George Sloane's Road and Wolfram Track for camping trips to observe wild nature at Pelion Plains or at Barn Bluff.⁴² At times the older track from Wilmot to Moina and Middlesex Plains was still used.

In early 1900 JW Lord's party departed Rosebery with mules along the Innes Track to Barn Bluff via Mt Swallow, Granite Tor and Mt Inglis. Boer War influence is palpable with the Transvaal term 'kopjes' used for buttongrass rises. Sea shell fossils fascinated as did the Bluff. Nature's masterpieces, waterfalls and mountains, bore the imprint of a master stonemason. Following the assertion that 'this must be one of the [state's] leading mining centres ... within a very few years', Lord predicted that a railway from Mole Creek would make the area a 'great summer resort'.⁴³

Beattie's commercial career began with his 1879 St Clair visit described in Chapters 4 and 5. More pertinent were his turn of the century activities, especially the famous Tasmanian pictorial stamps, including Lake Marion, as an unusual promotional medium.⁴⁴ Through tourist guides, newspapers, public exhibitions, lantern shows, and membership of the Royal Society, Beattie was prominent in fostering a state

⁴¹For alternative routes see Chapters 4 & 8; for The Tramp, see *Weekly Courier* 14 September 1901

⁴²*A short guide to the North Western and North Eastern Districts*, p. 5

⁴³*Tasmanian Mail* 28 April 1900

⁴⁴M Tassell & D Wood, *Tasmanian Photographer from the John Watt Beattie Collection*, Melbourne, 1981, p. 7, for biographical information see M Roe, 'John Watt Beattie', *ADB* Vol 7, pp. 232-33; Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia*, pp. 80-87

awareness of natural and human attractions. Central to his work was an abiding love of the bush:

I have been essentially an outdoor man ... [and] nothing gives me greater delight than to stand on the top of some high land and look out on a wild array of our grand mountains. I am struck dumb, but oh! my soul sings.⁴⁵

Underpinning this was an appreciation of God's creation. From the eastern shoulder of Mt Oakleigh he observed

a grand picture, full of food, for the artist and the philosopher. The one would revel in material for his canvasses, and the other would find his soul lifted up towards the One whose presence under such conditions comes so near, and it is made manifest by His wonderful works around.⁴⁶

On the mainland several photographers were active conservationists. Charles Kerry of Sydney, instrumental in the walking movement, became President of the Alpine Club in the late 1890s; Jack Lindt promoted the Dandenongs, while Nicholas Caire played an important role in the formation of the Mt Buffalo National Park.⁴⁷ Beattie adopted a similar role, as seen in Chapter 5.

In April 1901 Beattie, WJ Lloyd, head teacher at Mole Creek, E Hawson and Boxall, guide Harry Andrews and packers, the Parsons brothers, headed from Liena via Innes' Track towards Pelion and Barn Bluff. Boisterous early autumn weather precluded photography of this 'wildly beautiful country.' When 'Nature smiled kindly', Beattie's prose was exalted. From the Forth Gorge, the country

presents to us a scene of the wildest grandeur. Photography cannot convey anything like a correct representation of the scene which I have not seen surpassed, in all my bush wanderings, for weird sublimity⁴⁸

⁴⁵Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia*, p. 8

⁴⁶JW Beattie, 'Notes on a Trip to the Barn Bluff Country', *PPRST*, 1900-1901, p. xxvii

⁴⁷Cato, *The Story of the Camera in Australia*, pp. 65-69 for Kerry, pp. 70-5 for Lindt & for Caire, pp. 76-79.

⁴⁸Beattie, 'Notes on a Trip to the Barn Bluff Country', p. xxix

Perhaps Macbeth inspired a fellow Scotsman because from button grass plains near Pelion West, he admired 'the breaking mists, twisting, writhing, and swirling, from the great gulph beneath, looked like some gigantic witch cauldron.'⁴⁹ At Pelion Huts, Beattie concurred with prospector G Renison Bell that 'it savoured somewhat of lunacy to come into this country in such weather' particularly with such photographic baggage.⁵⁰ Despite the region's beauty, Beattie did not advocate reservation, rather urging increased accessibility to assist mining. A trip report, accompanied by lantern slides, was presented to the Royal Society in September 1901 thus ensuring that local 'movers and shakers' were informed of the region's beauty.

In April 1905 Spurling, Launcestonians Gordon Dodery and Gault Lithgow, and the Roberts brothers, Knyvet and Richard, headed to Cradle. Knyvet, a Flowerdale farmer and Richard, a Sheffield banker, were experienced bush hands, having climbed Cradle in 1897. The approach was typical: train to Railton, coach to Sheffield, horses to Wilmot and then to Fields' Middlesex station. The undulating country from the Isis River was

broken up into glades studded with a graceful growth of gumtrees, made such an English-like woodland picture that it was hard to realise one was in the heart of Tasmania's rugged west. The picturesqueness was enhanced by the herds of magnificent half-wild cattle which roamed through the woods⁵¹

The park-like description indicated that 'nationalist' landscape appreciation had not fully matured. In the thick mist obscuring Cradle or 'The Roof as it is sometimes called,' they were 'lost in wonder at the chaotic confusion and fantastic shapes of the huge rocks'.⁵² After two abortive efforts, the group reached the summit. Spurling's photographic skills were matched neither by his botany (Fagus 'being the only

⁴⁹Beattie, 'Notes on a Trip to the Barn Bluff Country', p. xxxi

⁵⁰Beattie, 'Notes on a Trip to the Barn Bluff Country', p. xxviii

⁵¹*Weekly Courier* 27 May 1905

⁵²*Weekly Courier* 20 May 1905 photos of Little Horn and Knyvet Falls, 27 May 1905 photos Dove Lake & Cradle, giant Grass Trees

indigenous native plant in Tasmania) nor geology (Crater Lake being 'the pit of an extinct volcano')⁵³ There were relics of the past, piners at the Pencil Pine Creek, and intimations of the future when Spurling suggested that only distance from civilisation precluded stocking Dove Lake with trout.⁵⁴

Weekly Courier photos of Cradle country during the search for Bert Hanson in July 1905 were catalysts for bushwalking trips.⁵⁵ Dr Addison's 1907 walk has been described in Chapter 5. Addison hoped that the North West Tourist Association would promote such trips which 'hath many possibilities', that Tasmanians would 'catch the spirit of exploration' and in time Mainlanders would hear the news.⁵⁶ Ron Smith climbed Cradle in January 1907 with Charles Riggs and the following year with Ted and Bob Adams.

By 1909 tourist boosterism was everpresent with claims for Cradle that 'for grandeur it is hard to surpass in Tasmania'. Some analogies, such as comparing the Dove Falls with Niagara, were ludicrous.⁵⁷ A tourist track led from Middlesex station to Cradle, but the existing hut needed enlarging. Side trips along picturesque tracks to the Fury River mine (actually on the Fleece River Creek) became part of the pattern. Wild flowers, notably heath and lemon scented boronia, were another attraction. Most parties used either Cradle or Middlesex station as base, although that situation was soon to change. Debate over access continued: that from Wilmot was longer but less steep and easier than from Deloraine.⁵⁸ If these trips generated publicity, they were nothing compared with that arising from the Weindorfer-Sutton-Smith trips of 1909-1910, described in Chapter 5.

⁵³*Weekly Courier* 27 May 1905

⁵⁴*Weekly Courier* 3 June 1905 & photos Crater & Roberts Fall Little Dove

⁵⁵*Examiner* 12 September 1905

⁵⁶*Examiner* 1 March 1907

⁵⁷*Examiner* 5 January 1909

⁵⁸*Examiner* 11 February 1909

More obscure but also important was the Paddy Hartnett-Ted Clarke trip to Lake St Clair. From Liena, they ventured along the Mersey Valley, through Howell's Plains, The Paddocks and then climbed eastward over the Rugged and Traveller Ranges before descending to St Clair and the Cuvier Valley. Clarke and others had prior knowledge of the country as from Pats Hill, probably on the Traveller Range, he observed that many of the mountains and lakes are 'known to us but a great many are strangers'. Befitting a bushman the accounts are prosaic, 'the lake and mountains are now a fine sight', and refer concisely to activities such as fishing and shooting, route and topographic features. At the Lake they found the accommodation house and boat to be in want of repair and a conscientious caretaker. They prospected in the Cuvier Valley and discovered what they thought was an old whisky distillery. The account is replete with names of camps and features — Curry Camp, Lightning or Thunder Storm Park, Panama Lake and Refuge Island — that have disappeared into the mists of time. Nicknames — Gunman and Rifleman — reflect a military influence, although 'Digger' probably had a mining rather than a martial provenance.⁵⁹

More dramatic was the Steve Spurling, Knyvet Roberts and Scott of Launceston's trans-Plateau trip from Deloraine to Lake St Clair. They ascended Higgs Track to the Plateau before heading to the Walls of Jerusalem, Traveller Range and Lake Laura. The descent through the scrub was slow and arduous and it took thirty minutes with an axe to clear a rough camp site. They climbed Olympus and visited the Cuvier valley before returning across the Lake country on their fortnight trip.⁶⁰

⁵⁹K Church, 'Paddy Hartnett', *Langana*, 1986, pp. 58-9 & Diary EW Clarke, November 14-27 1910

⁶⁰Personal comment Barney Roberts, Flowerdale, 21 October 2003; B Roberts, 'Soliloquy in Cathedral Country', R McDonald, *Gone Bush*, Sydney, 1990, pp. 125-146 at pp. 142-3



Figure 46: Paddy Hartnett and Ted Clarke



Figure 47: Beaches Lake St Clair

Lake St Clair remained a walking magnet. In 1903-04, Rev J Oberon Harris, an acquaintance of New Norfolk explorer, TB Moore, stayed at Lake St Clair for 3 days and climbed Olympus, while his son, Osric, unsuccessfully attempted Mt Ida.⁶¹ Almost a decade later RA Black visited the Lake and climbed Olympus. His account provides probably the best description of Pearce's Log Hut at Cynthia Bay, and the damage wrought by vandals and time. The beach fascinated Black as it had Butler Stoney nearly fifty years earlier, and detailed botanical descriptions abound, including one of the rare alpine flax, *Linum albidum*. Nearing the summit the group thought they were indeed approaching 'the fabled seat of the Gods.'⁶²

An account survives of a Christmas-New Year trip of 1914-15 by the Perrin or 'Paddy's' Gang.⁶³ The story links with past and future journeys, and with characters central to The Reserve's walking history. Guide Paddy Hartnett drew on his November 1910 trip and knowledge from time spent at Du Cane and elsewhere in The Reserve. Nicknames reflect personal attributes and family relationships — Granny, Nipper and Squidge.⁶⁴ Their approach was conventional: train to Mole Creek, then from Gad's Hill shadowing the Mersey to Curry Camp. From here they diverged from the Clarke-Hartnett route, following 'slashes on trees' to Kia Ora, enduring two of 'Paddy's Miles' to the Cathedral or Du Cane farm, then over the Gap to Paddy's camp. Here packhorses and walkers separated with the Gang, now laden with swags, crossed featherbed and button grass and forded streams to reach the Lake camp.

⁶¹Pat Wessing personal comment August 2001

⁶²RA Black, 'A Walking Tour - Lake St Clair and Mount Olympus', *Mercury* 12 April 1913

⁶³Walter Perrin was a Londoner who became known in the late 19th century for his drapery business in Launceston, initially as Pepper & Perrin and later alone. Of his children, George 1881-1970 who married Florence Dawson, in 1907 was the most active walker; their daughters married Fred Smithies and Jack Branagan; other walkers included Nellie or Nipper whose daughters Bessie and Anne were prominent walkers. The account is 'Adventures of Paddy's gang', unpublished manuscript in possession Mrs Bessie Flood

⁶⁴Although so far precluding complete identification, almost certainly George and Florence, Nellie, Cyril and possibly Mabel and Ann Perrin, possibly Frank Heyward, and Dan Davies in the group. For Florence Perrin see V Veale, *Women to Remember*, St Helens, Tasmania, 1981, pp. 93-97

There were trips to Mt Ida and Mt Gould, a mountain ruin 'like huge stones thrown up in wild confusion by some race of giants who made a rampart against their foes in the opposite valley.' The travellers enjoyed simple humour: love of echoes and rolling stones, laughter at one another's misfortune; carrying a kangaroo home was a 'kangaroo funeral with Paddy as hearse and Ned chief mourner.' They hunted with dogs, shot game, fished, rowed on the Lake, played games, read, took photos, philosophised on a range of subjects from contemporary politics to anatomical details of mammals, engaged in horse-play, celebrated the arrival of the New Year and on the sabbath dressed in their Sunday finery. As with the Clarke trip, there are descriptions of huts and camps long since obliterated.

Attitudes to landscape celebrated a communion with nature:

the marvellous lake with its changing glory has never seemed more enchanting. The magnificence of the mountains, the beauty of the flowers and the singing of the birds have been a benediction.

When the night wind dropped the Lake

was a study in shadows. The water was whitey-yellow with ripples in centre opening out to the full width of the point nearer at the sides Olympus and Ida cast deep shadows. The mountains were blue against a silvery sky shading to red towards the horizon

At the Mersey falls, comparisons were romantic:

the flood caught an outputting rock in the descent and dashed out in a semi-circle of white radiance that as it fell, everchanging, looked like a bridal veil for a sea queen.

Paddy's contrasting comparison, 'like an avalanche of bales of wool', was quintessentially Australian. Interesting was the perception of the area as 'no-mans land' and Nature as revelation of God's work:

Tasmania's weird, wild, central solitude,
 In thee sometimes, we walked alone with God.
 And He has all his wondrous creatures showed
 in graceful flower and rushing water flood.
 away from the world's mad beating heart⁶⁵

The Americans, dentist Dr Ray and Edith McClinton's account and photos of their 1915 St Clair trip was wonderful publicity to the area. As described in Chapter 5, it was a pioneering venture. The McClintons expressed disappointment that so few Tasmanian's either knew or visited the Lake. Optimistic predictions of crowds thronging the chalet-lined lake were accompanied with regret that 'such an exquisite piece of nature's handiwork as Lake St Clair and its surroundings should be so completely isolated.' Needed were improvements to the fifteen year old accommodation house, and, to a lesser extent, roads. It was Tasmanians' patriotic duty to know the state's geography and to disperse funds to organisations such as the Northern Tasmanian Tourist Association to realise the dream.⁶⁶ Surprisingly the meeting between the McClintons and Paddy's Gang at Narcissus was not mentioned in the former's newspaper reports.

Fellow countrymen, Franz and Julius Malcher were welcome guests for Dorfer in March 1914. The brothers bivouaced overnight after becoming lost in the forest indicating the difficulty of trackfinding. In addition to socialising, fishing and snaring, they ascended Cradle and Barn Bluff and explored surrounding countryside. To ascertain heights they established three trig stations and carried equipment — spirit level, compass and aneroid barometer — to summits. The resulting sketch map was used by Benson in his article on flora of Cradle Valley.⁶⁷ Newsworthy was the Malchers' skyline traverse from Little Horn to Cradle using picks and ropes while their hob-nailed boots gripped the rough dolerite surface.

⁶⁵All references refer to the Adventures of Paddy's gang'

⁶⁶*Weekly Courier* for trip to Lake, 21 January 1915 ; for regrets 28 January; for patriotism and geography 4 February

⁶⁷W Benson, 'Notes on the Geology of the Cradle Mountain District,' *PPRST* 1916, pp. 29-43

Apart from likening kangaroo tracks across steep slopes to chamois tracks, landscape appreciation did not differ from English romanticism. Comparisons with alpine views were impossible because 'the foreground [was] too distant, isolated mountains 'were too far apart from each other', and Cradle so dominated distant mountain summits that they all ran in a horizontal line.'⁶⁸

Other visitors at Waldheim in 1918 included the Lindons, he ex-headmaster at Geelong Grammar and The Hutchins School, and she, a keen observer of Nature. (John Bowden recalled Lindon as an English classical scholar who described his pupils and Tasmanians as 'grubbly little colonials' and liked caning pupils, including 'Mac' Urquhart, later celebrated mathematician and bushwalker.⁶⁹) To reach Brown's Mt, now Mt Emmett, was a 'good long walk, & the climbing tough; also a very bad day for photography' and then they found a mountain looking as if 'some earthquake had caused the whole edifice to fall into ruins — enormous boulders piled anyhow, with huge cavern under them, ... '⁷⁰

In Christmas 1919, Henry Dennison Reed, grandson of businessman-philanthropist Henry Reed, travelled from Mole Creek to the Mersey. His hope of finding grazing country in the Gordon Valley demonstrated the resilience of the buttongrass myth. Between Kia Ora hut and Du Cane, Bully Hendricks, bushman snarer and prospector, lost the track and bogged the horses. They retreated to The Paddocks and walked, probably along the Clarke-Hartnett line, to St Clair.⁷¹ Tracks, labelled 'rough' on maps, were almost impossible to locate. Like many hunters and walkers,

⁶⁸F Malcher, 'Account of his trip to Tasmania in March 1914', NS 573/1/4; H Malcher (trans) 'The Tasmanian Mountains', pp. 23-29 in North-West Walker No 88 Autumn 1990

⁶⁹T Bowden, *The way my father tells it, the story of an Australian life*, Crows Nest, N.S.W., 1990, p. 87

⁷⁰NS 234/19/1 Annie Linden, The Lodge, Park St, Hobart to R Smith 17 May 1918

⁷¹Climbing what is now Bishops Peak, they headed past Chalice Lake and onto the Never-Never before camping at Camp Fire Creek hut. After heading up the Mersey they climbed into high country near the Ling Roth Lakes, followed the Traveller Range and eventually reached Cynthia Bay.



Figure 48: HD Reed crossing Kia Ora Creek, 1919



Figure 49 'Bully' Hendricks at camp, (a firefly) near Du Cane

they detoured to Clarence River to purchase provisions from Mrs Pearce⁷² The following year Dick and brother John, renowned art philanthropist of Heidi fame, returned to collect horses left the previous year.⁷³

A much smaller Perrin Gang in 1920 travelled Sloane's Road, detouring unsuccessfully to George's copper mine via the Razorback, and ascending to Pelion Plains. The itinerary included a ramble around Lake Ayr, climbing Ossa but not Pelion West. A four day sojourn to Barn Bluff insured the Perrin name for posterity: Lakes Jean and Eileen after their daughters and Perrins Bluff. From the family's summit Florence Perrin's epiphany ran thus:

... how I love it! ... the memory of which [this perfect day] will always live with me, the mountains just put their arms round me & hold me & when I am away long they pull & pull till I must go back

There was no recourse to 'park-like' appearances in Florence's description of Pelion Plains. Regrets of the mountain farewell — we 'turned our backs, perhaps for ever, on the place that that had given us so much true enjoyment & perfect health & hard muscle' — were overshadowed by departure from a 'sad & forlorn looking' Paddy.⁷⁴ On these trips the Perrins were never accompanied by their daughters, they probably being cared by relatives at Low Head.

In James Oddman, alias Charles Whitham's 1920 journey from Sheffield to Cradle Mountain, and thence to Tullah, local bush experience counted for naught, with Middlesex Plains still regarded as parklands. Oddman praised Waldheim for being

⁷²HD Reed, 'First trip to the Bush', pp. 24-38 in *Langana, Launceston Walking Club Magazine*, 1986; HD Reed personal comment, 1986 For provisions see also 'Tramping across Tasmania', *Weekly Courier* 4 June 1908 where they purchased two loaves of bread, a leg of mutton and four tins of jam

⁷³B Reid & N Underhill, *Letters of John Reed: defining Australian cultural life, 1920-1981*, Ringwood, Victoria, 2001, p. 825 John Reed to Dick Reed 22 August 1977 recalls myrtle and sassafrass from this trip

⁷⁴Perrin, 'Account of a trip to Barn Bluff ...' The party consisted of George and Florence Perrin, Launceston teacher Charles Macfarlane, guide Paddy and packer Dan Davies

the 'only tourist accommodation house I have seen which is exactly suited to its surroundings', and for its haute cuisine, with Claude Glover bringing in fresh meat and bread. The presence of sheep and cattle in the valley supports the view of Dorfer as preservationist. True to his reputation as a ladies' man, Dorfer urges Oddman to return with two wives, one for each man.⁷⁵ Perhaps influenced by Oddman's account, two years later a tourism guide warned that this route should 'not be attempted by any but good bushmen, and then only after getting full directions from people who know the country.'⁷⁶

Oddman's approach from the West was unusual, but not unique. In 1920 teacher WR Cottman and three youths ventured west along the Overland or Linda Track to the Lake. Here they met Launcestonians Dr McClinton, Fred Smithies and CF Monds, on a photographic and climbing expedition, who motored them to the Lake. Reflections of trees in the Lake were highlights, as were the sandy southern beaches. Cottman anticipated many modern environmental concerns, such as diminution in game by hunters and the hope that protective legislation would be enacted 'to preserve these beautiful shores from the fearful ravages of the timber men.' Cottman hoped to return next year not by the Overland Track but by Paton's new route, described in Chapter 5.⁷⁷ A Christmas-New Year party of 1920-21 comprising four ladies and three gentlemen motored to within three miles of Cradle before walking the remainder. They felt that native flora 'give you a guilty conscience as you trample them underfoot'; the cold meat they ate was wombat, and

⁷⁵J Oddman, 'The great Vision of the Guarded Mountain: being the story of a journey from Sheffield to the Carinthian's House to Cradle Mountain, and thence to Tullah', *ZDH* 7 May 1920 & L Whitham, 'Dissertation upon the Innes Track, falsely so-called', *Tasmanian Tramp* No. 33, 2000, pp. 128-35

⁷⁶*Complete Guide to Tasmania: Beautiful Tasmania for health, Holidays, Pleasure and Sport*, Hobart, 1922, p. 123

⁷⁷JR Cottman, 'On the 'Overland' Interesting trip to Lake St Clair', *ZDH*, 6 February 1920



Figure 50: Ascent of Marion's Lookout



Figure 51: McClintons, Perrins, Hartnett and Smithies on Mt Ossa

they climbed Mt Campbell and Barn Bluff, the latter being 'steeper and harder' than Cradle.⁷⁸

Not all Reserve experiences were positive. In the summer of 1921 Tim Field, Keith Archer and the Glover brothers, walked from Howell's Plains to the Lake. Where the Narcissus debouched into the Lake, Harry Glover drowned despite the best endeavours of Field, who was praised as a 'brave little Chap for the water is as cold as death.'⁷⁹ The increased accessibility and greater popularity of The Reserve displeased some. Vera Allardyce and sister, Keva Butler, daughters of Sir William Allardyce, Governor of Tasmania, and guests at Waldheim, lamented the encroachment of roads and intrusion of visitors into their domain. To them the remoteness of Cradle Valley was to be savoured in small groups, certainly not with huge numbers, despite Dorfer's reliance on increased numbers to maintain a living.⁸⁰

Walking Groups

People with common interests often coalesce into informal small groups. Such groups had been a feature of 19th century Tasmanian recreational walking, and became more prominent in the 1890s and early 1900s. The next evolutionary step resulting in the formation of bushwalking clubs required a critical mass of walkers with sufficient leisure and affluence, and a culture which valued walking and suitable places for walking. Nation-wide there had been an occasional walking club such as Bright Alpine Club, 1888, and Myles Dunphy's Mountain Trails Club, 1914, which

⁷⁸Mac, 'A Tasmanian Christmas Holiday - A trip to Cradle mountain', *Weekly Courier*, 10 February 1921

⁷⁹C Dean. *Cattle King of Van Diemen's Land: William Field (1774-1837)* Margate, 1998; report of drowning, *Examiner* 10 January 1921

⁸⁰NS 234/19/1 29 August 1923, 10 September 1925 & 9 April 1926; for Governor Allardyce, 1861-190 who resigned over inadequate salary to become Governor of Newfoundland from 1922-28, see E McLeod, 'Sir William Lamond Allardyce', *ADB*, Vol 7, pp. 40-1 & obituary, *Mercury* 4 June 1930

emphasised self-contained walking in more remote areas. (see Chapter 5) Details about the Launceston based Northern Tasmanian Walking Club, 1905 to 1907, are scant.⁸¹ Hobart's Sunday Trampers, who walked on the second Sunday each month, operated from 1920 until the late 1940s. Members were mainly professionals, including such influential figures as Michael Sharland, naturalist and later Scenery Preservation Board member, and botanist Leonard Rodway.⁸² Founded on a co-operative basis to purchase goods from England, the Hobart-based Mountain Club, 1911-1916, which visited a number of mountains and lakes, including Olympus and St Clair, was composed of upper and upper-middle class professionals.⁸³ The impact of war and dissipation of energies caused its demise. Links to succeeding clubs were scant: one to the Trampers but none to the Hobart Walking Club founded in 1929.⁸⁴ More active but representative of the older style was the loosely affiliated South West Expeditionary Club⁸⁵ composed of active walkers such as Len Livingston, mathematician 'Mac' Urquhart, Geoff Chapman, Cecil Murray and VC Smith. The 1920s and 1930s were the age of bushwalking clubs throughout Australia, partly fostered by tourism organisations and government railway departments as was seen in ET Emmett's role in the creation of the Hobart Walking Club.⁸⁶

⁸¹Walch's *Tasmanian Almanacs* 1905, p. 326, 1906 p. 327 & 1907, p. 329. The secretary was WH Marsh

⁸²D Cook, 'Sunday trampers', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 21, 1974, pp. 74-76

⁸³J Wythes, 'The Mountain Club', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 27, 1989, pp. 28-30. Members included Leonard Rodway and Michael Sharland

⁸⁴Wythes, 'The Mountain Club', pp 28-30. Personal correspondence John Cannon September 2005

⁸⁵H Gee & J Fenton (eds) *The South West Book*, Hobart, 1978, p. 33 & L Livingston, 'The South West Expeditionary Club', *Tasmanian Tramp* No. 11, 1953, pp. 20-22. For Urquhart see D Elliott, 'ML Urquhart', *The Journal of the Australian Mathematical Society*, Vol VIII (2), 1968, pp. 129-33 & 'Mac Urquhart', *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 17, 1966, pp. 62-3; for Chapman *Tasmanian Tramp*, No. 22, 1976, pp. 38-9

⁸⁶Sydney Bushwalkers, 1927 CM Hall, *Wasteland to World Heritage: preserving Australia's wilderness*, Melbourne, 1992, pp. 104-113

Walking Gear and Customs

Many today believe that the lot of pioneering walkers was an arduous one. There were neither waterproof clothes nor light dehydrated food. Tents were cumbersome and heavy compared with modern lightweight varieties and they carried a swag rather than a pack. Similarly utensils such as camp ovens were much heavier than today's lightweight gear. Loads were comparable: men often carried between 40 and 70 lbs, women about 30 lbs. Compasses were used and general topographic maps existed. Tracks were fewer and less well marked and guide books were general tourist ones rather than specifically targetting bushwalkers.

Yet not all was arduous. The country was more open than now, with firing the bush a common practice, and knowledgeable guides obviated the need for guidebooks and detailed topographic maps or modern navigational devices. Frequently pack-horses were used to carry heavier items such as tents to a base camp or hut from which walkers made day trips. Thus Paddy's Gang took extraordinary items such as a 'sausage machine' or mincer. There was at least one firearm and often a dog on each trip so the sausage machine was used. Greater quantities and varieties of fresh meat were eaten. Birds — swan, duck, wattle and parrots — wombat, wallaby, kangaroo and, on rare occasions, possums were included in the larder. Fresh bread was baked in camp ovens. Similar were innumerable cuppas, bacon, porridge, bread and jam, custard and fruit, and to a lesser extent tinned food. Less usual were breakfasts of kangaroo tail soup and curried wombat for Paddy's Gang. Surveyor Frankland's observation along the Huon in 1829 when arduous walking 'served to make one relish the grilled "Wombat" and "damper" which in other circumstances would not have been so palatable'⁸⁷ has been applicable to every generation of bushwalkers.

⁸⁷Frankland, *Five letters from George Frankland ...*, p. 29 Frankland to RW Hay 16 August 1829.

Walkers took some time to become accustomed to swags. Instead of inflatable mattresses or solid foam mats, walkers used young leaves and twigs from trees piled about 6 inches high. Some took blankets while others, especially in the 19th century, used possum skin rugs like a sleeping bag, with one under and the other atop. Gear was everyday clothing or for guides normal working garb. Use of huts and fires — then free from regulation — enabled drenched walkers to dry clothing.

Several took compasses, a few aneroid barometers to determine heights of mountains but only an occasional camera graced swags. Kletterer packed a tomahawk, a .380 rifle, aneroid barometer, telescope and pocket camera on his 1898 Cradle trip.⁸⁸ Moving from hut to hut meant that axes and cooking utensils often could be omitted from swags.

Latter-day walkers share attitudes with these pioneers. Dislike of walking across buttongrass plains⁸⁹ and prevarication in the face of inclement weather have persisted. Many walked whenever opportunities arose while those with choice often preferred autumnal walking to that of summer because of more settled weather. Many could empathise with Peregrinator, who

Thus inspired by a faint sound floating down we pursued our walk of faith, ignorant of whether our next step would be up or down, whether we should fall or stand. Though fatigued, we felt the awe-inspiring oppressive gloom of the forest far more, and the loss of the bright sun was far worse than mere muscular weakness.⁹⁰

⁸⁸*Tasmanian Mail*, 2 April 1898

⁸⁹S Spurling Junr, 'A trip to Cradle Mountain, No II', *Weekly Courier* 27 May 1905 & JB Walker, *Walk to the West* (ed) DM Stoddart, Hobart, 1993, p. 19

⁹⁰Peregrinator, 'Notes of a Trip in the vicinity of Cradle Mountain', *Colonist*, 17 March 1888

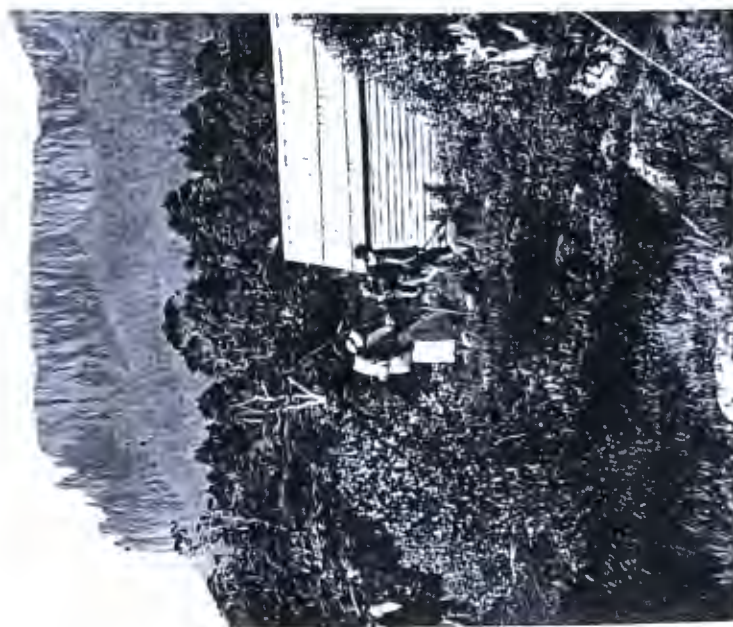


Figure 52: Walking Party at Pelion Huts



Figure 53: Waldheim

Likewise Peregrinator's musings at the end of a trip, 'And now the Cradle trip like many like it remains a pleasing reminiscence of the past and a joy for the future',⁹¹ remain pertinent.

Conclusion

One should not overestimate the importance of bushwalking in The Reserve. Here, and in the state as a whole, bushwalking was for a minority. 'Swaggie' in 1919 averred that, 'It needs no argument to persuade readers that an excursion to any one of our unspoiled fastnesses of Tasmania's interior is an excursion worth waiting a long while for',⁹² but went on to lament that most Tasmanians do not make the most of their opportunities because of 'family ties and other things that fasten us to our duties at home'.⁹³ Walkers came from varied backgrounds but mainly middle and upper middle classes, male and female. They included successful photographers, bankers, businessmen, professionals such as doctors, dentists, lawyers and architects, teachers and clergymen. All had the time, especially the professionals and teachers, the finances and the inclination. They were imbued with a sense of curiosity about the unknown and were prepared to 'rough-it'. Like angling,⁹⁴ the mix expanded to include teachers who were lower on the socio-economic scale.

Nevertheless the walkers' growing importance and that of outdoor recreation was partly recognised in the creation of national parks and scenic reserves. Numbers alone did not portray the complete picture. This minority group contained many of society's movers and shakers, such as Sir Elliott Lewis, ET Emmett and Clive Lord, and support of organisations such as the Royal Society. These, together with

⁹¹Peregrinator, 'Up the Cradle Mountain, No III', *Examiner* 11 March 1891

⁹²Swaggie, 'A holiday trip the Great Bend of the Gordon: We are a lazy community', *Tasmanian Mail*, 17 January 1919

⁹³Swaggie, 'A holiday trip the Great Bend ...'

⁹⁴HG 6 October 1885 provides a list of salmon and trout fishing licences. An examination of their backgrounds would provide an interesting comparison with bushwalkers

tourism and improvement groups and some wealthy businessmen and pastoralists, were potent in society. Again a note of caution is necessary: whenever preservation competed against the nearly all-pervasive dominant ideology of utilitarianism, the latter usually prevailed. The discerning, however, could see favorable trends such as increased emphasis on nature studies in school and a greater willingness by governments to protect native fauna and flora. All this was predicated on society remaining free from war and want — reform, in all its guises, usually decreases in times of economic depression. Those whose vision extended internationally saw that many parks such as Yellowstone had long-distance tracks for walkers. The Appalachian Mountain Club, 1876, had constructed a series of trails and huts by the 20th century and proposed a long distance trail. More probable than The Reserve seeing such changes was an increase of cars and so of walkers.

CONCLUSION

Jane Lennon of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands in Victoria in 1988 observed that

A large section of the public (uninformed and urban-based) do not want to know the facts of the more recent past — the 200 years of impact on the landscape — and appear to see national parks as primitive/primeval places with 40,000 years of sensitive Aboriginal occupation in harmony with the ancient landscape.¹

Lennon was commenting on management policies for Wilson's Promontory that would allow sites of past European activities to become obliterated by natural regrowth and recreational activities. Her conclusion that 'It is deceptive to promote static concepts such as "pristine wilderness" in a constantly changing native forest landscape'² is quite valid for contemporary treatment of The Reserve. A similar position to that sketched by Lennon exists in Tasmania. In 2004 Cradle Mt Park manager, Alex Simpson, asserted that the area 'has not been touched by man' and people walking on the Overland Track had a 'total wilderness experience.'³ Obviously Mr Simpson had not even read official National Parks brochure which give information about European history in The Reserve.

Yet Simpson's assertion is not the complete story. Another section of society takes pride in European activities but also does 'not want to know the facts of the more recent past'. This minority group, loosely termed 'traditional users', mythologise their use of parts of The Reserve by harking back to a non-existent golden age or

¹J Lennon, 'Timeless Wilderness? The use of historical source material in understanding environmental change in Gippsland, Victoria', pp. 419-440 in K Frawley & N Semple, *Australia's Ever Changing Forests*, Canberra, 1988, p. 436

²Lennon, 'Timeless Wilderness?' p. 436

³'Cradle Mountain', ABC Radio *Bush Telegraph* 14 April 2004

paradise. In part these claims are based on maintaining a sense of community threatened by continued rural-urban drift and the demise of some small communities surrounding The Reserve. As well the protagonists are fighting a bureaucracy, supposedly 'green dominated', which they perceive to be hostile to their interests. Thus their claims are an amalgam of socio-cultural, economic and political forces.

This thesis has demonstrated that by 1922 The Reserve's history contained narratives of exploitation of natural resources by Aborigines and Europeans. By no means can the area be described as pristine wilderness. Many of the nuances of these earlier activities will never be known because they belong in part to the unofficial world which, as seen throughout the thesis, never completely intersected with the official world. Some evidence has been recovered by appreciating or reading the landscape or the Book of Nature. In 1955 the doyen of British landscape historians, William Hoskins avowed that

The landscape itself, to those who know how to read it aright, is the richest historical record we possess. There are discoveries to be made in it for which no written documents exist, or have ever existed. To write its history requires a combination of documentary research and of fieldwork, of laborious scrambling on foot wherever the trail may lead. The result is a new kind of history⁴

Hoskin may well have specified oral sources for they are a rich source of evidence for the unofficial world. Unfortunately, the majority of those associated with this world in The Reserve had died well before the author became interested in the area. Limited scientific skills have precluded the writer from obtaining a total picture, but still the thesis has uncovered much. The use of government statutes and information from government gazettes has been used to supplement the more usual

⁴W Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape*, London, 1955, p. 14

primary and secondary sources. One laments about want of materials such as farm diaries and a more comprehensive archaeological survey. History rarely provides all the evidence desired.

Restrictions of time and space has precluded comparisons with European countries where walking in wild places is highly valued. Outdoor recreation, with walking and skiing pre-eminent, is a majority interest in Norway. Two insights offer fruitful insights. World renowned musician Greig made a classic avowal of mountain glory

When I contemplate the possibility of a future visit to the mountains, [Jotunheimen] I shudder with joy and expectation, as if it were a matter of hearing Beethoven's Tenth Symphony⁵

Norwegian walking has been aided by laws such as the Outdoor Life law, *Lov om friluftslivet*. There is no concept of trespass and at any time of the year, outlying property may be crossed on foot, providing due care and consideration is shown.

Walking as a valued activity and an appreciation and identification of wild landscapes were prerequisites for contemporary walking for pleasure. Both represented a dramatic change in British attitudes to land, its maturation awaiting the democratisation of walking in the mid 20th century. Cultural changes, largely wrought by artists, litterateurs and landscape gardeners, combined with increased affluence and technological change, to create the phenomenon of walking for pleasure in wild places. In his guidebook to the Lakes in 1810 Wordsworth summarised the situation:

Within the last sixty years a practice, denominated Ornamental Gardening, was at that time becoming prevalent over England. In union with an admiration of this art, and in some instances in opposition to it, had been generated a relish for select parts of natural scenery: and Travellers, instead

⁵*Outdoor Life* p. 97

of confining their observations to Towns, Manufactories, or Mines, began (a thing till then unheard of) to wander over the island in search of of sequestered spots, distinguished ... for the sublimity of beauty of the forms of Nature there to be seen.⁶

This cultural baggage accompanied the first settlers to Van Diemen's Land. Identification of wild places began with early explorers, but widespread public awareness had to await an appreciative local culture with sufficient leisure and affluence. As well, there had to be basic infrastructure of transport, roads and accommodation to move visitors from towns to wild country. In essence, the phenomenon was part of mass tourism which relied on the newly developed photographic movement to promote particular areas. Attitudes towards scenery ranged along a John Ruskin continuum from mountain gloom to mountain glory. Anticipating walkers, yet gathering information to make a paradise, were a number of groups surveyor-explorers, artists, stockmen, timbermen, hunters and prospector-miners. Motives ranged from the utilitarian, interested in harnessing the Reserves' resources, to aesthetic and scientific. Photographers and to a lesser extent painters brought the attractions of the area to the attention of the public.

Of the exploitive land use groups only the hunters could regard the area as almost a paradise. For all others there were too many qualifications. In providing summer feed, The Reserve enabled graziers to run more stock than if they relied solely on home properties. Limited area and nutritive plants, potential for weather extremes and opportunity for stock theft prevented The Reserve from being a pastoral paradise. In mining, initial exploratory work held out prospects of mineral wealth. But riches were illusory and to this extent The Reserve proved a fool's paradise. Stands of pine were limited in extent and transport to market a major but not

⁶W Wordsworth, *Guide to the Lakes* (ed) E de Selincourt, Oxford, 1977, p. 69

insurmountable obstacle. Thus The Reserve was not a pinner's paradise. Native fauna was abundant here and the cold weather produced thick fine furs with an international reputation. To obtain them was an arduous task, with only the master craftsmen within any distance of paradise. In the 20th century, with increasing regulation, and the introduction of close seasons, clouds began to envelop paradise. The prescient could discern portents: possible declaration as a game sanctuary and the loss of key areas if boundaries were adjusted to reflect topographical features. With the industry ever dependent on the vagaries of international markets and the whims of fashions, for hunters The Reserve can be best described as verging on Paradise Lost.

For individuals — Paddy Hartnett, Bert Nichols, Harry Andrews and Gustav Weindorfer — The Reserve was almost a paradise. Being involved in more than one activity their economic situation was subject to fewer vagaries than if dependent upon one. Each situation was different yet similar. Elements of their paradise included enjoyment and mastery of differing activities, being content with their own company and at ease with small groups, and superb bushcraft skills which enabled them adapt to ever-changing conditions. In a sense they felt at ease for The Reserve was their home.

Artist-photographers such as Prout, Spurling and Beattie, enjoyed a temporary paradise when the natural elements combined to provide scenes of wonder and enchantment. Botanists and geologists were similarly placed when nature provided insight into nature's mysteries, such as a new plant species or evidence of glaciation. Explorer's enjoyment of paradise in The Reserve was even more fleeting but still

intense when they discovered paths through the landscape or enjoyed glimpses of the natural beauties.

Examining whether The Reserve was almost a walkers' paradise must begin with a caveat. Society can be divided into those who enjoy walking in wild places for pleasure and those who do not. Those like Edwin Oldham who ascended the King William Range because such an omission would have been 'nothing short of the crime of contempt for the beauties of nature'⁷ are a minority. At the other extreme were those like Mr Dean of *Belmont* who found it incomprehensible that they [Allport's party in 1863] would take 'so much trouble to make ... [themselves] uncomfortable'.⁸ As ever, the majority are placed between the extremes

Initially, the attracted were affluent professionals who had the time and wealth to permit extended trips. Along the walker's path to paradise, there were numerous obstacles to overcome. Society had to accumulate a body of knowledge of the area which permitted walkers, first with guides and then alone, to traverse the area. As a group, walkers had to develop bush skills to allow them to sojourn with a degree of comfort. Ironically, like angling, walking was initially the province of the well-to-do, which slowly filtered to the upper middle class, while their bush education was in the hands of working class guides, who harnessed the land's resources. With increased visits, many walkers developed competencies which enabled them to increasingly enjoy nature's treasures in out of the way places.

⁷*Tasmanian Mail* 14 May 1881

⁸Morton Allport, 'An account of our late trip to Lake St Clair', to Curzon Allport, March 1863, Excursion to Lake St Clair, MS Box 11, Folder 7, Allport Library

What elements prevented The Reserve from being a paradise for walkers in May 1922? According to present day walkers, paradise was unattainable when observation and exploitation of nature co-existed. In 1922 this would not have been an issue for most, thus indicating that definitions of paradise vary over time and according to individual temperament. However, there were signs of divergence during the campaign for a scenic reserve as hunters and miners started to become scapegoats. Dependence upon guides, relative inaccessibility and absence of lightweight tents restricted them to walking in summer-autumn in areas where tracks existed or where guides took them. The fringes, especially on the west, were unvisited by walkers, and winter walking, with the exception of an occasional visitor to the immediate environs of Cradle Mt and Lake St Clair, was unknown. Peregrinator, WD Weston, and his parties transcended these self-imposed restrictions as indicated in Chapter 10. Thus The Reserve was indeed Peregrinator's Paradise. For other walkers The Reserve was almost a paradise. It was sparsely peopled and offered adventure and a sense of being the first to climb a peak or visit a waterfall, opportunities denied walkers today.

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